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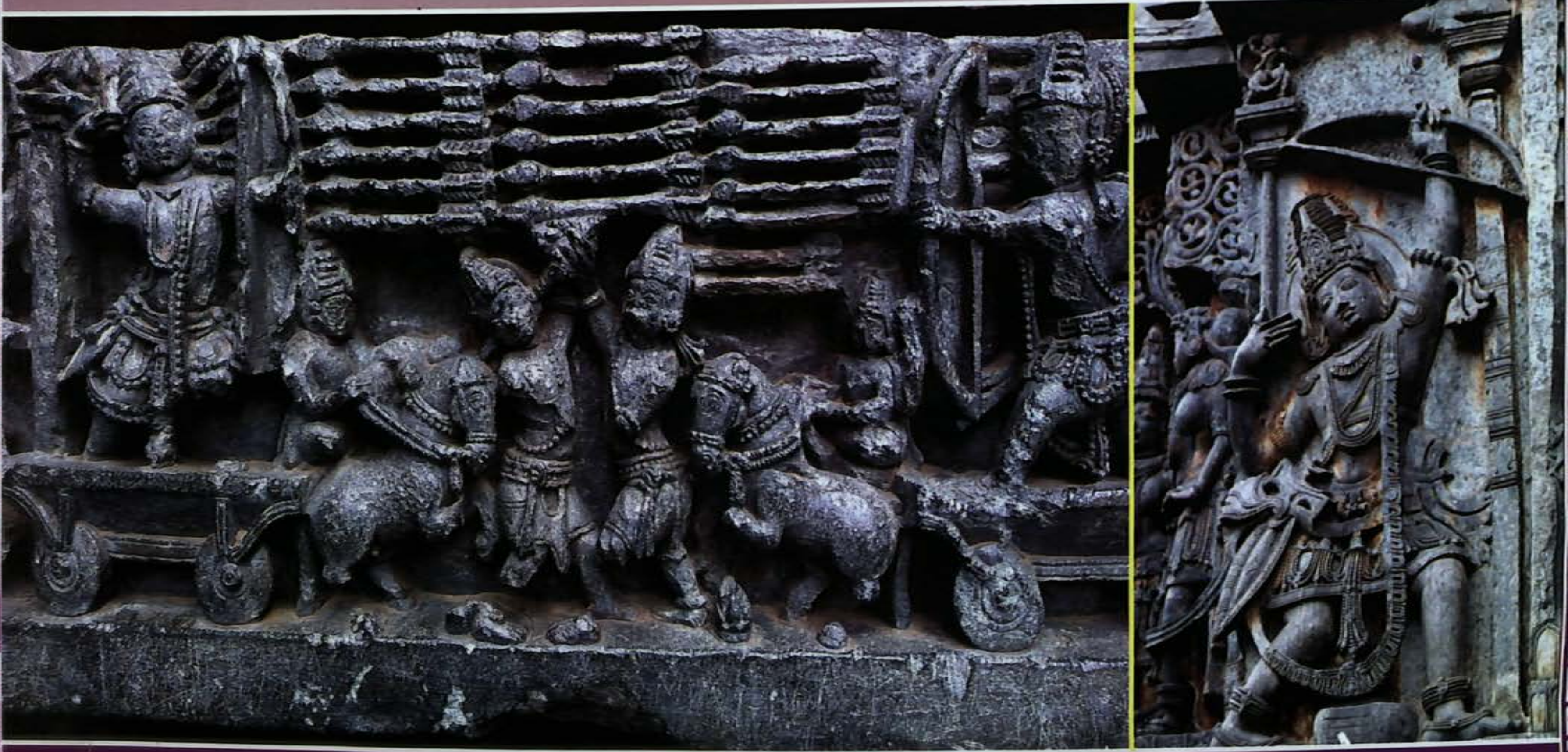
Message of Mahabharata

National Conference - June 26 - 30, 2019



Message of Mahabharata

A Unique five-day National Conference

June 26 - 30th, 2019

Editor ***Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. S. Ranganath***

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
Bengaluru

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e-mail : bhavanblrhns50@gmail.com / hbcollege18@yahoo.co.in

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FOREWORD

I am highly grateful and immensely happy to present the foreword to the present volume entitled "Message of Mahabharata" on behalf of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan as a follow up of the volume entitled "Message of Ramayana"—A national seminar held from 26th to 30th of June 2019 jointly organized by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru and ISKCON, at the multi vision auditorium of ISKCON.

There is nothing in our literature that can measure upto Mahabharata's vastness of range. The Mahabharata is at once an archive and a living text, a museum and a laboratory, a source book, complete by itself and an open text perennially under construction. A store house of information, the Mahabharata furnishes ample material to any professional interested in "excavation" and the professional may don the hat of say—"An Anthropologist, A Historian, A Sociologist, A Linguist, A Literary Critic, A Historian of Ideas, A Philosopher to work out even if provisionally some or the other well integrated meaning" Mahabharata has ethical dilemmas, logical puzzles and unavoidable impasses which baffle the modern man.

The present volume contains 24 research papers (25) presented in three languages namely Kannada, English and Hindi and is a comprehensive compendium with contemporary relevance. The volume is a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity, intellect and wisdom, orient and occident and is like a bridge between the wisdom of the sages on the one hand and the intellectuals of the present century on the other hand. It is hoped that the present volume would find favour with scholars and laymen alike.

I would like to appreciate the earnest efforts of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and ISKCON for bringing out this unique volume as a follow up of "Message of Ramayana" which will be of immense importance and relevance for posterity.

Mahamohopadhyaya
Dr. S. Ranganath
Vidvan, M.A, Ph.D, D. Litt., Visharada

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Dr. S.L. Bhyrappa, Padmashree and Saraswathi Samman Awardee and Dr. Madhu Pandit Dasa, Padmashree Awardee and President ISKCON, Bengaluru lighting the lamp to inaugurate five days National Conference on Message of Mahabharata. Shri H.N. Suresh, Director, BVB is also seen in the picture

Critical Edition of Mahābhārata

—Prof. Saroja Bhate

After a careful scrutiny of the Mss. material collected from all the corners of the country, the foremost editors arrived at a conclusion that through the centuries the text of the Mbh. was handed down in two recensions Northern (Āryāvarta) and Southern (Dākṣiṇātya).

The Mahābhārata (Mbh.) occupies a place of pre-eminence in the cultural history of India. It is acclaimed as the world's largest epic,8 times larger than the wellknown Greek epic, the Iliad. This unique product of literary activity is highly praised as the most inspiring monument of the world and an inexhaustible mine for the investigation of religion, mythology legend, philosophy, law, custom and political and social customs of India (V. S. Sukthankar, 1933, iii).

In order to understand why and how the Mbh. assumed this monumental form, it is necessary to undertake a journey deep down in the past. Since there is enough, though not substantial, evidence to prove the historicity of the epic, scholars believe that the seed of the epic narrative lay in the saga of the great war for the throne of Hastināpura that was waged between two royal families of cousins belonging to Kuru dynasty. The war saga was sung by bards. The bards went from door to door to narrate the tale. It was thus handed down by words of mouth through the centuries. They sang it also in the assemblies, while singing the bards almost recomposed the tale adding their own compositions and drawing relevant content from their own cultural background. Since the content was important no careful attention was paid to the text. This diversity at the level of both form and content was bound to find its reflection also in the written tradition. Both the oral and written traditions continued side by side and influenced each other, they drew upon each other. This process of transfusion must have continued for centuries until the Śatasāhasrī Samhitā came into existence in the early centuries of the first millennium. References to this great epic in works like Aśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra (3.4.4) can help us to establish the existence of the text from the period not later than 5th century A.D.

Dr. V. S. Sukthankar, one of the greatest Mbh. scholar of the last century carefully studied the manuscript material handed down through the centuries and preserved in various manuscript collections both, in and outside India. He was the first to get lost into the "bewildering profusion" of the textual tradition which existed before as well as after the text passed through the hands of a diaskeust. Thus he remarks in his Prolegomena that the Mbh. is a word "which must have been growing not only upwards and downwards but also laterally like a Nyaggrodha tree growing on all sides (Sukthankar, 1933, lxxvii). In other words the manuscript tradition of the text is far from being uniform. This lack of uniformity is reflected in the early printed editions of the epic. Thus, for example, the number of stanzas in the Bombay Edition of 1963 is 95826, in the Gopal Narayan ed. of Bombay with Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary; it is 10010, whereas in Kumbhakoṇam edition of 1931 the number of stanzas is 110545. So, what is the Mbh. we have arrived at the end of this journey into the past centuries of its origin and growth? We find ourselves lost in the forest of

Aśvattha trees where it is difficult to locate the original, the 'father' tree. In other words, we are surrounded by several Mbh.s and are unable to reach the Ur-Mahābhārata.

This is the background against which an urgent need for a standard critical edition of the Mbh. was strongly felt. It was voiced, for the first time by M. Winternitz, the German Indologist in 1897 at the 11th session of the International Congress of Orientalists held in Paris. Following his suggestion a committee was formed and, consequently, H. Lüders, the German Indologist, prepared a specimen of the critical edition of the first 67 stanzas of the Ādiparvan based on 29 mss available in European libraries. Unfortunately however, at the outbreak of the first world-war the work came to a stand-still. The world-war which proved a curse for the humanity was in a sense, a boon disguise for India. Because this project, which was to bring accolades from all over the world after its completion, was transferred from Europe to India, to Poona. It was launched in the B.O.R.I. in 1919, soon after it was founded. Dr. S. V. Sukthankar was appointed General Editor in 1925. With his hard work and profound scholarship Dr. Sukthankar gave the project a solid and firm foundation by laying down the methodology for preparing the critical edition. After a careful scrutiny of the bewildering profusion of versions, he arrived at a conclusion that it was impossible to retrace all extant versions to any authentic archetype and therefore impossible to apply to the Mbh. the established canons of textual criticism. He therefore set out to formulate new canons which could suitably apply to a complicated text like the Mbh. He found a ray of hope, while wading through the conglomerate mass of literature, in the fact that "a considerable portion of the inherited text can be incontestable proved to be authentic and unimpeachable". He worked in this project for 17 long years and handed over a complete set of guidelines to the future generations of Mbh. editors, in the form of his Prolegomena, the bed-rock of Mbh. textual criticism. His sudden demise in 1943 was a serious blow to the project. However, it continued under the equally capable general Editorship of Dr. S. K. Belvalkar and following him, Dr. P. L. Vaidya. Ten different editors, Dr. Renou, Dr. Raghuveer and Dr. R. N. Dandekar being some of them edited different parvans. Pandits from places like Śāntiniketan and Tanjore were also engaged for collating Mss. written in scripts like Bengali and Telugu. Finally, after fifty years of hard work of many scholars and pandits the critical edition of the complete text of the Mbh. including *Harivaṁśa* was ready in 19 massive volumes.

Now let us try to understand the methodology. After a careful scrutiny of the Mss. material collected from all the corners of the country, the foremost editors arrived at a conclusion that through the centuries the text of the Mbh. was handed down in two recensions Northern (Āryāvarta) and Southern (Dākṣiṇātya).

Northern recension is available in five scripts, namely, Śāradā, Nevāri, Maithilī, Bangālī, and Devanāgarī, whereas the Southern recension is available in three scripts, namely, Grantha, Tamil and Telugu.

There are thus 8 versions of the text. Different mode of narration is the basis for the division into two recensions. The Southern recension is considerably larger; it is rich with many more stories, descriptions and prayers. The narration is more precise and schematised. Dr. Sukthankar calls it *textus ornatior.* On the contrary the Northern recension is "more like a story naively narrated" (S. P. xxxvi). However a very clear family resemblance between the two recensions leaves no room for doubt about the fact that both the recensions must have sprung from a common source. A closer study of the versions further reveals that texts have been extensive mutual borrowings, and therefore the number of stanzas in each version is different. Extreme types among the versions differ in their extent by 13000 stanzas, i.e. 26000 lines. The first generation of scholars trained in the Lachmannian school of stemmatics undertook the work of collation. Out of the 1259 Mss collected from different places, about 300 Mss were selected for collation. Only 10 Mss were found to be complete. The no. of Mss. collated for each parvan was different. For instance, out of 235 Mss of Ādiparvan, 70 were used for collation and 60 Mss were actually used for critical edition. A very distinct feature of this critical edition is that no single ms was used as the Vulgate. The collation sheets recorded variations even of a single letter in each and every ms. Thus by using comparative method the editors selected the readings using certain principles and prepared what is described as the constituted text, a text of the Mbh. which is not found in its totality in any single available ms and yet which could be regarded as the archetype from which sprung whole Mss. tradition.

The principles behind the selection of a certain variant are simple. Firstly, the text that was uniformly documented in all the versions of both the recensions, that reading in case of more than one reading, text reading which was found in the largest no. of versions is accepted. In a more complex situation, for instance, if two readings show equal merit, the reading of the Kashmir version is adopted. The Kashmir version was, according to the foremost editors, the least contaminated. In case of intrinsic merit, the reading of the Northern version was always preferred as closer to the original. For instance, the two lines, महर्षेः पूजितस्येह सर्वलोके महात्मनः । and महर्षे :सर्वलोकेषु पूजितस्य महात्मनः । convey the same meaning and have the same wording. The editor preferred the line which is found in the Northern version.

Another noteworthy feature of this edition is, keeping emendations to the minimal. The editors hardly engaged themselves in correcting readings. Finally, the additional lines, portions, passages are added either page below the text, or in the appendix depending on their extent. One can find some popular episodes, such as Draupadi's refusal to marry sūtaputra Karṇa, which appears only in six Devanāgarī Mss. and Nīlakaṇṭha's version is not included in the constituted text. Similarly, the wellknown prayer by Draupadī to Kṛṣṇa at the time of Vastraharaṇa in the Royal assembly and Kṛṣṇa's subsequent appearance providing an infinite chain of garments to her is relegated to appendix, since it is absent in some versions. After the inclusion of all such additional passages in the appendix the total number of stanzas of the critically edited text of the Mbh. is reduced to about 75000 stanzas from the massive whole of 100000 or even more stanzas.

This critical edition which contains a constituted text certainly does not claim to bear the autograph of the celebrated author, Maharshi Vyāsa. Since the available Mss cannot be placed further down beyond the fourteenth century, the text cannot be traced to antiquity; it probably belongs to the medieval period.

The critical edition thus has established that "a single version of the Mbh. fixed in writing was at the base of the entire Mss tradition of the Mbh" (S.P. 152). However, it has its own limitations. For instance, it still contains passages or stanzas which are mutually contradictory. For instance, in the Ādiparvan (1.116.31) there is a description of Mādrī, Pāṇḍu's second wife committing *sati* after Pāṇḍu's death: she mounted the funeral pyre and consigned herself to the flames. However, in the next chapter there is a description of the dead bodies of Pāṇḍu's and Mādrī being carried to Hastināpura and Vidura and others performing their funeral rites. There are a few other instances of mutual contradiction as well as repetition of some passages. Dr. Sukthankar has answered, in a befitting manner, all the criticism levelled against the treat of the Mbh. in his last lecture on the meaning of Mbh. He says at one place, "However, much the textual critic might peel off the external trapping of the great epic, its Gestalt remains absolutely unaltered". In other words, the critical edition has established beyond doubt that the Mbh. has not ended in becoming a chaos as Oldenberg describes it, but rather the cosmos as Dr. Sukthankar puts it. We should, I think, look at the critical edition from the eyes of its editors who undertook this task in response to Vyāsa's clarion call to duty.

I therefore pay my salute to the great architect of the critical edition who, in his ardent desire to echo "that embodied voice of the Collective Unconscious of the Indian people" has pledged to broadcast to the mankind, in this hour of its need and peril, the luminous message of the Maharṣi:

न जातु कामान्न भयान्न लोभात्
धर्म त्येजेत् जीवो जन ॥

❑

aesthetics of mahabharata

—**Prof. Radhavallabh Tripathi**

The *Mahābhārata* rightly adjusted as a *lakṣyagrantha*[4] and an *upajīvyakāvya* in the tradition of Alankarashastra. A *lakṣyagrantha* is a text that leads to the evolution of principles of literary criticism and provides authentication and validity to various theories and categories under it. An *upajīvya kāvya* is a grand narrative that has sustained the nation, has been functional as a source for civilization.

In the tradition of Alaṅkaraśāstra or literary theory in Sanskrit, the Mahābhārata is viewed as an *ārṣa kāvya*—a poem composed by a *ṛṣi* (seer). A *ṛṣi* is defined as the one who can see. Bhaṭṭatota, one of the greatest masters of Alaṅkāraśāstra, adjusts the equation between the poet and the seer in the following terms:

> A person who is not a *ṛṣi* cannot be a *kavi,* and the *ṛṣi* is called so, because of the capacity of *darśana.* The insight into the peculiar nature of phenomena revealing their essence is *darśana.* It is because of *darśana* (vision) and *varṇana* (expression) both that a person attains the status of a kavi in this world. (Despite the vision) the poem would not be composed unless there is expression.[1]

Only two works in the whole range of Sanskrit literature have been defined as *ārṣa kāvyas* or poems composed by *ṛṣis* or seers—the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*[2]. The texts of these two great epics also identify their creators as seers. In the *Mahābhārata* it is said that Vyāsa visualised the flow of time, he could see the past, present, and the future of the race of Kurus and the destiny of the country and whole history[3]. After having *darśana* he then proceeded for *varṇana* to create the great epic.

The *Mahābhārata* is therefore rightly adjusted as a *lakṣyagrantha*[4] and an *upajīvyakāvya* in the tradition of Alankarashastra. A *lakṣyagrantha* is a text that leads to the evolution of principles of literary criticism and provides authentication and validity to various theories and categories under it. An *upajīvya kāvya* is a grand narrative that has sustained the nation, has been functional as a source for civilization.

The *Mahābhārata* itself defines its text as a grand narrative that would, "become an *upajīvya*—a source that sustains or enlivens all the good poets, just as a good lord becomes an *upajīvya*–a source for livelihood—for all the servants desirous of progress."[5] It is also proclaimed that this poem would be to the poets what the presiding deity of rains is to all beings–a source that keeps them alive.[6]

---

[1] नानृषिः कविरित्युक्त ऋषिश्च किल दर्शनात्।
विचित्रभावधर्मांशतत्त्वप्रख्या च दर्शनम्। ।
दर्शनाद् वर्णनाच्चैव स लोके प्रथितः कविः।
नोदिता कविता तावद् यावज्जाता न वर्णना।। (Bhaṭṭatauta q. in Abh.)

[2] Sāhityadarpaṇa, VI. 304

[3] सम्भूता बहवो वंशा भूतसर्गाः सविस्तराः
भूतस्थानानि सर्वाणि रहस्यं त्रिविधं च यत् ।
वेदयोगं सविज्ञानं धर्मोऽर्थः काम एव च ।।
धर्मकामार्थशास्त्राणि शास्त्राणि विविधानि च ।
लोकयात्राविधानं च सम्भूतं दृष्टवानृषिः।।
इतिहासाः सवैयाख्या विविधाः श्रुतयोऽपि च ।
इह सर्वमनुक्रान्तमुक्तं ग्रन्थस्य लक्षणम् ।
विस्तीर्यैतन्महज्ज्ञानमृषिः सङ्क्षेपमब्रवीत् ।। (MB. Ādiparvan. 1.45-48)

[4] रामायणमहाभारतप्रभृतिनि लक्ष्ये सर्वत्र प्रसिद्धिव्यवहारं लक्षयतां सहृदयानामानन्दो मनसि लभतां प्रतिष्ठाम् - Dhvanyāloka, I.I

The Mahābhārata, as an *upajīvyakāvya* not only presents the worldview, the paradigms and standards for the Indian way of life, it is also a source for literary criticism. The *Mahābhārata* in this way also spells out the criterion of literary analysis to be applied to itself. In fact, it was basically through the text of the *Mahābhārata*, that the whole scenario of literary theory in the first millennium underwent a revolutionary change. The theory of *Śānta rasa* (sentiment of peace) and finally *Śānta* as a *mahārasa* (greatest of the *rasas*) or *Mūlarasa* (basic *rasa*) could be possible because of the *Mahābhārata*.

Some modern critics have viewed the Mahābhārata as "an epic of genocide" a tragedy and "a literary monster." Some of its characters like Bhiṣma are presented as examples of Oedipus complex. In Indian tradition however, the Mahābhārata is regarded as a *Mahāvākya* (a single unified discourse)óbecause the whole poem culminates into the realisation of the *puruṣārtha*s (the aims of life) and finally leading to the fourth *puruṣārtha*, i.e., *mokṣa*; *Śānta* being its dominant *rasa*. The Mahābhārata does describe war, but it cannot be viewed as a poem of heroic sentiment or *vīra rasa*. There is more of *raudra rasa* (wrath or anger) than *vīra*, as wrath and terror are woven together in most of the episodes of the great war. But more than even *raudra*, it is *bībhatsa rasa* (sentiment of disgust) that percolates the deeper structures of the narrative. The uniqueness of the *Mahābhārata* lies in the fact that it is perhaps the only epic in our literary tradition leading to the realisation of *puruṣārtha* through *bībhatsa rasa*. To understand this, we have to review the theory of *rasa* as expounded by Bharatamuni.

Bharatmuni has identified four *rasa*s as the basic or *mūla rasa*s. They are *śṛngara* (love or beauty), *vīra* (the heroic), *bībhatsa* (disgust) and *raudra* (wrath). Out of each of these, four subsidiary *rasa*s are generated. Thus *hasya* (laughter) is born out of *śṛngara*, *adbhuta* (wonder) comes of *vīra*; *bhayānaka* (fearsome) is produced by *bibhatsa* and *karuna* (sadness) by *raudra*.

This concept of basic and subsidiary *rasa*s has its own logic as the four basic *rasa*s are invariably linked with the *purusharthas*; *śṛngāra* to *kāma*, *vīra* to *dharma*, *raudra* to *artha* and *bībhatsa* to *mokṣa*. *Bībhatsa rasa* is of two typesó*kṣobhaja* (agitation, generated by anguish) and *udvega* (anxiety, born out of uneasiness or disgust). The former leads to disillusionment. This disillusionment clears the path to salvation.

Through the aesthetics of *bībhatsa rasa* therefore, the spectator or reader undergoes through the experiences of anguish, unease and disgust, which will finally liberate him from the mundane and the earthly life. Abhinavagupta is right is suggesting that the experience of *bīibhatsa rasa* would thus lead to *śānta* and to salvation. *Kṣobhaja* type of

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[5] इदं कविवरैः सवैराख्यानमुपजीव्यते ।
उदयप्रेप्सुभिर्भृत्यैरभिजात इवेश्वरः।।

[6] सर्वेषां कविमुख्यानामुपजीव्यो भविष्यति। पर्जन्य इव भूतानामक्षयो भारतद्रुमः॥ (Ādiparvan I.92)

bībhatsa is also called *śuddha* (pure) and it leads to liberation (*moksha*)[7].

The aesthetics of Mahābhārata thus rests not on *tanmayībhavana* or empathy. It is just opposite to the aesthetics of ecstasy or rapture. It is the aesthetics of distance and detachment. The text itself accepts that this poem is not about pleasure and happy times. It is going to describe something sad and awful. At the very outset of the narrative, Vyāsa approaches Satyavatī, his mother, and tells her that most unhappy times are approaching. Nobody could foresee a great war when the Kaurava and the Paṇdava princes are just children. But Vyāsa can see the shape of things to come and forewarns his mother Satyavatī in the most unequivocal terms.

> अतिक्रान्तसुखाःकालाःप्रत्युपस्थितदारुणाः।
> श्वःश्वःपापीयदिवसापृथिवीगतयौवना॥
>
> *Ādi Parvan, 1ṭ28.6*

(Gone are the days of happiness
Something terrible is imminent
Each successive day is even more disastrous
The youth of this earth is spent out.

It is true that the Mahābhārata presents the deepest moments of crisis in history and in human life involving perennial questions of existence. But there is this warning note, which resounds again and again in its texture. The sense of utter waste persists. After emerging victorious in the great war, Yudhiṣṭhira says: "The whole world appears empty and hollow and no longer pleases me. They are all gone—the friends and kin—and my army is wasted away."

Arjuna the great hero of the Mahābhārata war, loses ground in a pathetic debacle at the hands of petty robbers and is unable to rescue the ladies of Yādava family. This is an ending without rasa that is defined as a *vīrasāvasāna* (ending without *rasa*).

But the Mahābhārata does not end in this utter dejection and sense of helplessness. The deep anguish and disgust that the heroes like Yudhiṣṭhira and Arjuna feel paves the way for *śānta rasa* and *mokṣha*.

There is no feeling of joy and sensuous pleasure at the end of the Mahābhārata. Both Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, two of the greatest *ācāryas* of *Rasa-dhvani-Prasthāna*, therefore agree that the Mahābhārata has a *virasāvasāna*–an ending devoid of *rasas*. Commenting on this Abhinavagupta says: "Annihilation of each other by the people of Vṛṣṇi race, the calamity inappropriately befalling on the Paṇdavas and Kṛśṇa's annihilation by a hunter–the Mahābhārata in this way has an ending that is devoid of *rasa*."[8]

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[7] संसारनाटकरागप्रतिपक्षतया मोक्षसाधनहेतुत्वाच्छुद्धः। Abh. Vol. I Delhi. Ed. p. 326..
शृङ्गाराद्धि भवेद्धास्यो रौद्राच्च करुणो रसः । वीराच्चैवाद्भुतोत्पत्तिर्बीभत्साच्च भयानकः (Nāṭyaśāstra, VI.39)
शान्तो रसो रसान्तरैर्मोक्षलक्षणः पुरुषार्थः पुरुषार्थान्तरैस्तदुपसर्जनत्वेनानुगम्यमानोऽङ्गित्वेन विवक्षा विषयः।
मोक्षफलत्वेन चायं परमपुरुषार्थिनष्ठत्वात् सर्वेरसमयः प्रधानतमः। (Abhinava on Dhvanyāloka, Udyota IV)

[8] महाभारतेऽपि शास्त्ररूपे काव्यच्छायान्वयिनि वृष्णिपाण्डवविरसावसानवैमनस्यदायिनीं समाप्तिमुपनिबध्नता महामुनिना वैराग्यजननतात्पर्यं प्राधान्येन स्वप्रबन्धस्य दर्शयता मोक्षलक्षणः पुरुषार्थः शान्तो रसश्च मुख्यतया विवक्षाविषयत्वेन सूचितः। (Dhvanyāloka, Udyota IV)

Ānandavardhana not only holds the *Virasāvasāna*–an ending devoid of *rasas* as the culmination point of this great epic, he further says that the Mahābhārata is a *śāstra* and has been brought to end with complete disillusionment or detachment because a *śāstra* should be in a form of a discourse on some *puruṣārtha*.[9]

Ānandavardhana also informs that there has been a tradition of interpreting the Mahābhārata in this way, and its author the great and wise Vyasa with an intention of rescuing the people from the abyss of ignorance in which they were weltering, leads them to emancipation.[10]

All other *puruṣārthas* are subservient to *mokṣa* here and all other *rasas* subsidiary in relation to *śānta rasa*. The opponents of this theory would possibly raise the question: how to decide the conspicuousness of *mokṣa* and *śānta rasa* only, when the text itself declares in the very beginning that all the *puruṣārthas* are to be delineated here. Ānandavardhana says that there is an inherent focus on moksha in the Mahābhārata and it is not proclaimed directly, but suggested through the very presence of Sri Krishna as the Sanatana Tattva. The more one witnesses the sheer waste of the system, the more the renunciation.[11]

The fact that the author of the Mahābhārata has named one of the last *parvas* of this epic as the *Śānti Parva* is potent evidence for corroborating the theory of Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta. The understanding of the Mahābhārata requires a paradigm different from the prevailing norms of aesthetics in the later tradition of Sanskrit literary theory.

If the presence of Sri Krishna as eternal reality or the Sanatana Tattva makes the Mahābhārata a grand discourse in *Śānta rasa* it is the presence of Vyasa as a seer or *ṛṣi* that invests it with a unique character—a text on Time.

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[9] वृष्णीनां परस्परक्षयः पाण्डवानामपि महापथक्लेशेनानुचिता विपत्तिः कृष्णस्यापि व्याधाद् विध्वंस इति सर्वस्यापि विरसमेवावसानमिति। ...तथापि पर्यन्तविरसत्वमत्रैवावलोक्यताम्। मोक्षे तु यद्रूपं तस्य सारतात्रैव विचार्यतामिति। (Ibid)

[10] एतच्चांशेन विवृतमेवान्यैर्व्याख्याविधायिभिः। स्वयमेव चैतदुद्गीर्णं तेनोदीर्णमहामोहमग्नमुज्जिहीर्षता लोकमतिविमलज्ञानावलोकदायिना लोकनाथेन -

यथा यथा विपर्येत लोके तन्त्रमसारवत्।
तथा तथा विरागोऽत्र जायते नात्र संशयः।।
इत्यादि बहुशः कथयता।

ततश्च शान्तो रसो रसान्तरैर्मोक्षलक्षणः पुरुषार्थः पुरुषार्थान्तरैस्तदुपसर्जनत्वेनानुगम्यमानोऽङ्गित्वेन विवक्षा-विषय इति महाभारततात्पर्यं सुव्यक्तमेवावभासते। अङ्गाङ्गिभावश्च यथा रसानां तथा प्रतिपादितमेव। पारमार्थिकान्तस्तत्त्वानपेक्षया शरीरस्येवाङ्गभूतस्य रसस्य पुरुषार्थस्य च स्वप्राधान्येन चारुत्वमप्यविरुद्धम्। ननु महाभारते यावान्विवक्षाविषयः सोऽनुक्रमण्यां सर्व एवानुक्रान्तो न चैतत्तत्र दृश्यते, प्रत्युत सर्वपुरुषार्थप्रबोधहेतुत्वं सर्वरसगर्भत्वं च महाभारतस्य तस्मिन्नुद्देशे स्वशब्दनिवेदितत्वेन प्रतीयते। (Ibid)

[11] अत्रोच्यते सत्यं *शान्तस्यैव रसस्याङ्गित्वं महाभारते मोक्षस्य च सर्वपुरुषार्थेभ्यः* प्राधान्यं इत्येतन्न स्वशब्दाभिधेयत्वेनानुक्रमण्या दर्शितम्, दर्शितं तु व्यङ्ग्यत्वेन "भगवान्वासुदेवश्च कीर्त्यतेऽत्र सनातनः" (I.i.256) - इत्यस्मिन् वाक्ये अनेन ह्ययमर्थोव्यङ्ग्यत्वेन विवक्षितो यदत्र महाभारते पाण्डवादिचरितं यत्कीर्त्यते तत्सर्वमवसानविरसमविद्याप्रपञ्चरूपञ्च परमार्थसत्यस्वरूपस्तु भगवान् वासुदेवोऽत्रकीर्त्यते तस्मात् तस्मिन्नेव परमेश्वरे भगवति भवत भावितचेतसो मा भूतविभूतिषु निस्सारासु रागिणो, गुणेषु वा नयविनयपराक्रमादिष्वमीषु केषुचित् सर्वात्मना प्रतिनिविष्टविषयः। तथा चाग्रे पश्यत निस्सारतां संसारस्येतत् यदममुमेवार्थंद्योतयन् स्फुटमेवावभासते व्यञ्जकशक्त्यनुगहीतश्च शब्दः। एवंविधमेवार्थं गर्भीकृतं सन्दर्शयन्तोऽनन्तरश्लोकाः लक्ष्यन्ते - स हि सत्यम् (I.i.256) इत्यादयः।(Ibid)

In the same way, Vyasa also sees the flux of Time in a continuum. The tradition would define his power through the motif of *divyadṛṣṭi* (super-sensuous or divine vision of the intangible). Vyāsa, in the Mahābhārata, is not only equipped with this *divyadṛṣṭi* himself, he has the power to impart it to others. Thus, when *Dhṛtarāṣṭra* wants a firsthand account of the happenings of the Mahābhārata war, Vyāsa endows Sañjaya with *divyadṛṣṭi*, so that, seated before Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the royal palace of Hastināpura he can see the war being fought at Kurukṣhetra as if it being fought in front of his eyes. The motif of *divyadrishti* has been introduced in the Mahābhārata to suggest the pervading outlook of the whole discourse—projecting the tendency to view the great saga of human life in a dispassionate way.

This "seeing the drama" of this world in a dispassionate way invests the literary structure of the Mahābhārata with two *alaṅkāras* that manifest in a grand discourse only—they are *udātta* and *bhāvika*.

The concept of *alaṅkāra* in Sanskrit poetics is marked with a comprehensive approach to arts. Since *alaṅkāra* also means ornament, the proponents of the *dhvani* theory adopting a strategy, proclaimed that *alaṅkāras* are like ornaments, they are external to poetry. The *ācāryas* of the *alaṅkāra* school on the other hand regarded *alaṅkāras* as integral parts of a literary piece, like heat in fire. Considering the etymology, the word *alaṅkāra* is formed by the root *kṛ* with prefix or *upapada alam*. Amarakosha has given four meanings of the upapada alam, that is, *bhūṣaṇa* (decoration or embellishment), *vāraṇa* (negation or elimination), *paryāpti* (sufficiency) and *śakti* (power). The first three are related to surface structure, deep structure and deeper structures in an art form. The process of beautification or *bhūṣaṇa* initially manifests at the outer structure and also subjects the contents of a literary piece or art form, and incorporates the activity of elimination or exclusion (*varana*) for its culmination in fulfillment (*paryapti*). This *paryapti* involves a holistic view, and inculcates sufficiency at the structural level too. This triple process of *bhūṣaṇa, varana* and *paryapti*, with the fourth element of *shakti* embedded as an inherent force, tends to make an artistic creation extraordinary and this extraordinary nature of art is *alaṅkāra*.[12]

The *ācāryas* have termed it as *alambhāva* or *alaṅkārabhāva*, which in literature or a piece of art encompasses all the three levels of human existence, that is, *ādhibhautika* (empirical), *ādhidaivika* (psychic), and *ādhyatmika* (spiritual). The creative process under *bhūṣaṇa*, *vāraṇa* and *paryāpti* functions on these three levels respectively. Earlier *ācāryas* of the *Alaṅkāraśāstra* like Dandin, Udbhata, Bhoja etc. regarded it as the fundamental principle in literature. *Alaṅkāra* is the attribute (*dharma*) in poetry which generates beauty.[13]

Therefore, *alaṅkāra* in literature and art must unfold a holistic view of life functioning on all these three levels, and its concept encompasses the complete aesthetics.[14]

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[12] लोकोत्तर्णेन रूपेणावस्थानमित्ययमेवासौ अलङ्कारभावः

[13] काव्यशोभाकरान्धर्मानलङ्कारान् प्रचक्षते। (KD, II.1)

[14] सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः काव्यालङ्कारसूत्र, I.I.II

There are *alaṅkāras* that form the core structure of a literary piece. Bhoja calls them *ābhyantara* or internal *alaṅkāras*. There are other types of *alaṅkāras* that belong to the outer structure of a literary piece. They are *bāhyālaṅkāras* in the terminology of Bhoja. There is a third category of *bāhyabhyantara* (external-cum-internal) *alaṅkāras*.

When the Mahābhārata defines its own criterion for poetry, it naturally names the element of *alaṅkāra* at the outset.[15]

Alaṅkāras are integral parts of the literary structure and aesthetic design, but some *alaṅkāras* result from the poetic vision and intuition of the poet and they form the deep structures of a literary piece. As I have stated earlier, *bhāvika* and *udātta* are two such *alankaras* in the case of the Mahābhārata. *Bhāvika alankara* is based on seeing things in a vision, culminating into a clear perception. Even the other *alaṅkaras* like *upama*, *rupaka* or *utprekṣa* form a part of this great vision. In *bhāvika* the happenings of the past and things to happen in the future are portrayed so vividly that the reader is able to see them. This quality of a literary discourse, unfolding of the vision of past and future leading to clear perception is *bhāvika*[16]. In fact, it is an *alaṅkāra* that pervades a complete discourse, it does not manifest in one stanza. Ruyyaka says that in *bhāvika* the past and the future become alive before our eyes, they become perceptible. We stand witness to them. Bhāmaha, Dandin, Ruyyaka and other *ācāryas* define picturesqueness, sublimity, miraculous nature of things, the dramatic quality of the story and unwavering nature of the words–as the causes of *bhāvika*. *Bhāva* is the intention and inner view of the poet, externalisation of which creates *bhāvika*. The theme is grand, and speech and expressions match it, so that everything becomes subservient to the intention of the poet. Then it is *bhavika*[17].

Ruyyaka also says that there are two types of correspondences in poetry—subjective and objective—*hṛdayasaṃṁvāda* (empathy) and *vastusaṁvāda* (objective visualization). In *Rasavadalaṅkāra* we have *hṛdayasaṁvāda* and in

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15. अलंकृतैः शुभैः शब्दैः ....छन्दोवृत्तैश्च विविधैरन्वितं विदुषां प्रियम् आदि., I.28

16. तद् भाविकमिति प्राहुः प्रबन्धविषयं गुणम्। प्रत्यक्षा इव दृश्यन्ते यत्रार्था भूतभाविनः॥ चित्रोदात्ताद्भुतार्थत्वं कथायाः स्वभिनीतता।
शब्दानाकुलता चेति तस्य हेतुं प्रचक्षते। (III. 53-54)
तद् भाविकमिति प्राहुः प्रबन्धविषयं गुणम्।
भावः कवेरभिप्रायः काव्येष्वासिद्धिसंस्थितः॥ परस्परोपकारित्वं सर्वेषां वस्तुपर्वणाम्। विशेषणानां व्यर्थानामक्रिया स्थानवर्णना॥
व्यक्तिरुक्तिक्रमबलाद् गम्भीरस्यापि वस्तुनः।
भावायत्तमिदं सर्वमिति तद् भाविकं विदुः। (KD, II. 364-65)

Later authors have viewed Bhāvika as unfolding of the vision of past and future leading to realisation. Appaya Dīkṣita defines it as Bhūtabhavyārthasākṣāddarśanavarṇanam - (direct vision and narration of past and future) Āśādhara Bhaṭṭa in his com. on Kuvalayānanda defines Bhāva in Bhāvika as Sākṣātkāra or vision - Bhāvāya Sākṣātkārāya Prabhavatīti Bhāvikam.

17. तद् भाविकमिति प्राहुः प्रबन्धविषयं गुणम्।
प्रत्यक्षा इव दृश्यन्ते यत्रार्था भूतभाविनः ॥
चित्रोदात्ताद्भुतार्थत्वं कथायाः स्वभिनीतता ।
शब्दानाकुलता चेति तस्य हेतुं प्रचक्षते ॥ (III. 53-54)

Svabhāvokti there is *vastusaṁvāda*. But in *bhāvika* it is neither *vastusaṁvāda* nor *hṛdayasaṁvāda*. It is clear perception or *sakṣātkāra.*

The imagery of a tree is repeatedly used in the Mahābhārata. If we make a tree of *alankaras* in the Mahābhārata, the *alaṅkāras* like *bhāvika* and *udātta* will form the roots, *alaṅkāras* based on contradiction--*virodha*, *asaṅgati*, *vibhāvana viśeṣokti* form its trunk and *alaṅkāras* based on emotions its branches, *alankaras* based on similitude its flowers, etc.

Bhāvika is interwoven everywhere in the great epic—in the descriptions of war, graphic descriptions of the flora and fauna of this country of forests, mountains and rivers, Draupadi's humiliation in the assembly of the Kauravas, and the scene of lamentations of the ladies after the great war. Almost all the episodes are structured in *bhāvika alaṅkāra*.

Bhāvika alaṅkāara also manifests in the statements of universal truth and wisdom and in such passages it is combined with *udātta*. For example:

अमृतं चैव मृत्यु द्वयं देहे प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मृत्युमापद्यते मोहात्सत्येनापद्यतेऽमृतम् ।।

Śāntiparvan, 175.30

(Death and immortality both are enshrined in this body, through infatuation one gets death, through *satya* one gets immortality.

शोकस्थानसहस्राणि भयस्थानशतानि च । \
दिवसे दिवसे मूढमाविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ॥

Śānti Parvan, 25.20

There are thousands of occasions for sorrow
and there are hundreds of occasions for fear.
Verily, they overpower the fools
and not the pundits.

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं प्रियं वा यदि वाऽप्रियम्।
प्राप्तं प्राप्तमुपासीत हृदयेनापराजितः।।

Virāt. 17.19, *Śānti* 25.26; 28.16; 174.39

Be it joy or sorrow, be it wanted or unwanted; as and when that comes, one should accept it, but should not accept defeat in heart.

न चापि वैरं वैरेण केशव व्युपशाम्यति ।
हविषाग्निर्यथा कृष्ण भूय एवाभिवर्धते ।।

Udyoga Parvan, 70.63

(O Keśava! Vengeance cannot be satiated through vengeance. Like fire by oblation it would be further inflamed.

Bhavika is joined by *udatta* in the Mahābhārata, as the whole epic ultimately presents the glory of man and dignity of human life. Despite the plethora of sins and magnitude of human degradation, the basic idea that there is nothing more precious and better than a human being in this universe remains deep rooted in the Mahābhārata. If we examine the lives and deeds of the major characters, there is none among them who has not committed a mistake or who is entirely free from blemish, not even Kṛṣṇa who is said to be representing the *Paramātman* in the Mahābhārata. All of them suffer from contradictions. But in the core of their being they are dignified, even Duryodhana is great in his death. He gives up his body without any qualms, he lies serene in peace and the gods shower flowers on his body.

Alaṅkāras based on similitude are interwoven in the structures that are created out of *bhāvika alaṅkāra*, so that they form a part of the vision. *Alaṅkāras* such as *upamā*, *utprekṣā*, and *rūpaka* add colors to the picturesque qualities of *bhāvika*. The whole army marching ahead is compared to a moving big canvas[18], the whole scene of ladies lamenting in the battlefield after the war is compared to a sad story painted on a canvas.[19]

The clarity of perception and visualization through images that are marks of *bhāvika alaṅkāra* insinuate many other *alaṅkāras* based on similarity. When Kṛṣṇa approaches the Kauravas as a messenger for peace and emphasizing the need for a compromise, he uses the simile of the forest and tiger that protect each other:

वनं राजा धृतराष्ट्रः सपुत्रो व्याघ्रास्ते वै सञ्जय पाण्डुपुत्राः।
मा वनं छिन्धि सव्याघ्रं मा व्याघ्रा नीनशुर्वनात्।
निर्वनो वध्यते व्याघ्रो निर्व्याघ्रः छिद्यते वनम्।
तस्माद् व्याघ्रो वनं रक्षेद् वनं व्याघ्रं च पालयेत्॥

Udyoga Parvan, 29.55

(O Sañjay! King Dhṛtarṣṭra, together with his one hundred sons is forest,
The sons of Pāṇḍu are tigers,
Don't cut the forest with tiger,
May the tigers not perish in the forest.
Without forest, the tiger would be killed,
Without tiger the forest will be devastated.
Let the tiger protect the forest and let the forest nourish the tiger.

A lonely Dhritarashtra, after the annihilation of the whole of his dynasty, describes himself with the following simile:

लूनपक्षस्य इव मे जराजीर्णस्य पक्षिणः

(I am like a bird withered with old age whose feathers have been slashed.)

After hearing of the death of Duryodhana he falls on the ground like a big tree fallen in the storm:

पपात भुवि दुर्धर्षो वाताहृत इव द्रुमः। (स्त्री.)

(He fell on the ground like a tree hit with the wind.)

हतपुत्रशतं दीनं छिन्नशाखमिव द्रुमम्।

(His hundred sons having died he appeared like a free with all the branches slashed, or a tree burnt in the fire:

अग्निदग्ध इव द्रुमः *(Vana Parva)*

or a tree that falls in the stream of the river from the bank:

मणिः सूत्र इव प्रोतो नस्योत इव गोवृषः।
स्त्रोतसो मध्यमापन्नः कूलाद् वृक्षः इव च्युतः॥

In all these images forming examples of *upamās* or *utprekṣās*, the imagery of tree recurs in the Mahābhārata quite significantly. Elsewhere the metaphor of a big tree (*mahādruma)* is employed for the great epic itself, or for it's great heroes also. If Yudhishthira is a tree of *dharma*, Arjuna its trunk and Bhima its branches. Duryodhana is a tree of vengeance. This is *sāṅga rūpaka.*

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[18] ददृशे बलमायान्तं पटं चित्रगतं यथा - Āalyaparvan, 1.40

[19] प्रलापयुक्ता महती कथा न्यस्ता पटे यथा। - Āśramavāsikaparvan 40.20 / comp. शल्य. 1.43

कर्णपर्वसितैः पुष्पैः शल्यपर्वसुगन्धिभिः।
(Ādiparvan I.92)
स्त्रीपर्वैषीकविश्रामः शान्तिपर्वमहाफलः।।
अश्वमेधामृतरसस्त्वाश्रमस्थानसंश्रयः।
मौसलश्रुतिसंक्षेपः शिष्टद्विजनिषेवितः।।
तस्य वृक्षस्य वक्ष्यामि शाखापुष्पफलोदयम् ।
स्वादुमेध्यरसोपेतमच्छेद्यममरैरपि ।

(Mahābhārata 1.1, 106-107, 120 shirman
Mahābhāratalakshalankarah Vol. I. p 11-12)

दुर्योधनो मन्युमयो महाद्रुमः स्कन्धः कर्णः शकुनिस्तस्य शाखाः।
दुःशासनः पुष्पफले समृद्धे मूलं राजा धृतराष्ट्रोऽमनीषी ।।
युधिष्ठिरो धर्ममयो महाद्रुमः स्कन्धोऽर्जुनो भीमसेनोऽस्य शाखाः।
माद्रीसुतौ पुष्पफले समृद्धे मूलं कृष्णो ब्रह्म च ब्राह्मणाश्च ।।

(Udyoga Parvan, 29.45-46)

Similies, metaphors, and illustrations come as offshoots of *bhāvika alaṅkāra* in the Mahābhārata or they fall within the periphery of its vision as a poem of *śānta rasa*. They are integrated with the universal wisdom and knowledge of human behaviour. They enliven and invigorate statements revealing certain universal truths. Bhishma recommends that a King should behave with his subjects like a pregnant woman behaves with the child in her womb, she does not do anything for her own sake; whatever she does is to be done for the child to be born:

भवितव्यं सदा राज्ञा गर्भिणीसहधर्मिणा।
कारणं च महाराज शृणु येनेदमुच्यते।।
यथा हि गर्भिणी हित्वा स्वं प्रियं मनसोऽनुगम्।
गर्भस्य हितमाधत्ते तथा राज्ञाऽप्यसंशयम् ।।
Śāntiparvan, 56.45

Because of the vision of the seer the imagery becomes cosmic, encompassing a wide spectrum. In reply to the question of the Yaksha—*kā vārtā*?—what is going on in this world? Yudhishthira says:

अस्मिन् महामोहमये कटाहे सूर्याग्निना रात्रिदिवेन्धनेन ।
मासर्तुदर्वीपरिघट्टनेन भूतानि कालः पचतीति वार्ता ।।

Vana Parvan, 313.118

In the great pan of infatuation, with the fire of the Sun and fuel of the days and nights, stirring the ladle or scoop of months and seasons, Time is baking all the beings.

Above all, the Mahābhārata provides examples of cosmic imagery, visualizing the macro within the micro. The metaphor of Universe as one Puruṣa (man) presents a structure resulting out of the treatment of *bhāvika and udātta alaṅkāras* in the epic. Uttaṅka praises Viṣṇu in the following terms:

शिरस्ते गगनं देव नेत्रे शशिदिवाकरौ ।।
निःश्वासः पवनश्चापि तेजोऽग्निश्च तवाच्युत ।
बाहवस्ते दिशः सर्वाः कुक्षिश्चापि महार्णवः ।।
ऊरू ते पर्वता देव स्वं नाभिर्मधुसूदन ।
पादौ ते पृथिवी चैव रोमाण्योषधयस्तथा ।। (Vanparvan)

O Lord! sky is your head, the sun and the moon your eyes.

The wind forms your breath, the fire your luster
All directions are your arms

and the great sea your sides,
the mountains are your thighs, the orbit your naval
the goddess earth forms your feat and all herbs and
plants your hair.

The description of a forsaken Damayantī living unknown in sort of a self-exile also presents a visualization:

मन्दं प्रख्यायमाणेन रूपेणाप्रतिमेन ताम् ।
निबद्धां धूमजालेन प्रभामिव विभावसोः ।।
विध्वस्तपर्णकमलां वित्रासितविहङ्गमाम् ।
हस्तिहस्तपरामृष्टां व्याकुलामिव पद्मिनीम् ।।
चन्द्रलेखामिव नवां व्योम्नि नीलाभ्रसंवृताम् ।
देहं धारयती दीनं भर्तृदृशनैरकाङ्क्षया ।।

By her incomparable beauty, she appeared like the flames of fire being engulfed by layers of smoke, like the lotus pond that has been destroyed by a wild elephant with its lotus plants having fallen and the terrified birds having flown away. Like the new ray of moon suddenly overshadowed by clouds. And yet she was holding her body with the hope of seeing her husband.

On the other hand, *alaṅkāras* like *virodha, asaṅgati, apahnuti, viṣādana* based on dialectics, dichotomy, and satire provide tools for analysis of the literary structure of the Mahābhārata; and they are also embedded in its literary structure. All the characters in this epic suffer from inner contradictions and inconsistencies. Bhiṣma himself does not marry, but he works as a matchmaker—first for his own father, then for all the next generations. What a pity that a son has to make desperate attempts to marry his father off to a maiden who could have been his own bride!

He addresses the girl of his age as mother and brings her home as a bride of his father. He says to Satyavati—*adhiroha ratham matargacchavah svagruhaniti*—mother, please ascend on the chariot and come with me to our house. He cannot face a woman, appears weaker before the weaker sex. He is the most knowledgeable person in the Mahābhārata, yet he is unable to answer the simple question of Draupadi—was Yudhishthira authorised to put her on stake in the gamble? A ferocious Bhīma, who is always advocating war with the Kauravas, makes a pathetic appeal to Krishna for establishing peace, when the latter is proceeding as a messenger for making truce between the cousins.

यथा यथैव शान्तिः स्यात् कुरूणां मधुसूदन ।
तथा तथैव भाषेथा मा सम युद्धेन भीषयेः ।।

Udyoga Parva, 2.17 (74.1--(?)

Taken by surprise at his stance, Krishna asks him what has happened to him, upon which, he delivers a sermon on the evils of war.

The Mahābhārata is not only the most voluminous epic in our tradition, it is one of the brightest illustrations of poetic excellence.

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❑

Mahabharata—the gospel of character formation

—Swami Japasiddhananda

In religion, prosperity, happiness, and Spiritual emancipation whatever one finds here may be found elsewhere and that which is not here is not existent anywhere either'. The study of sacred Mahābhārata, even done in part, completely destroys all sins of the reader endowed with faith and conviction. Mahābhārata, the gigantic epic, is an all-in-one scripture of Hindus. It is well-nigh impossible to categorize or rate it as belonging to one particular genre. Epithets such as *itihāsa* (history), *nītiśāstra* (science of ethics), and *mokṣaśāstra* (scripture of Spiritual emancipation) even when put together fail to completely describe the epic and what to speak of in segregation. Mahābhārata is all these and much more, for, it contains all branches of learning. It is also a great scripture of character building.

Introduction

Knowledge, success, peace, bliss are essential goals of human life. Motive and the means adopted in achieving these make a man noble or evil. Pure, benign motives ensure beatitude while mean, selfish incentives degrade the soul. Thought, word and deed are tools man uses to weave the web of life. Lofty thoughts, kind, truthful words and noble deeds lead to freedom and blessedness. Base thoughts, words and actions lead to bondage and misery. Vigilance, therefore, is absolutely necessary in all phases of life. The more careless a man is, the more miserable he becomes, sooner or later. Swami Vivekananda states "Ninety percent of thought force is wasted by the ordinary human being, and therefore he is constantly committing blunders; the trained man or mind never makes a mistake."[1] Diligent effort at self edification yields unfailing results. Peace and blessedness follow every effort at self development. The pains taken in cultivation of noble character never goes in vain. The Lord declared - "pārtha naiveha nā'mutra vināśastasya vidyate | na hi kalyāṇakṛt kaścid durgatiṃ tāta gacchati || - O son of Pṛthā, there is no loss for him (who strives for spiritual gain); because no one who does good meets with a bad end" Then why man goes astray? Lust and greed are powerful drivers. Driven by them man commits ignoble acts, takes to devious means to achieve his ends and ends up as a dubious character. Lust and greed when obstructed breed anger and once caught in this triangle man loses his senses, howsoever learned he may be for that. They lead him away from the innate human glory, and he errs in basic morals. Seldom he realizes that pleasure and pain are after all mere messengers or pointers to something else beyond the normal gaze and routine happenings. The message conveyed or the impact generated by pleasure and pain stays on in the form of information and goes on to build the character of man. Swami Vivekananda elaborates "As pleasure and pain pass before his soul they have upon it different pictures, and the result of these combined impressions is what is called man's 'character'. If you take the character of any man, it really is but the aggregate of tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind..."[2] How to know the nature of these tendencies and the consequences thereof. That forms a special science, the science of Yoga, to be studied with the same rigour, if not more so, as one would do in any other academic discipline. Mahābhārata is an excellent supplement to this science, a made-easy version as it were, that appeals to all age groups. It is a voluminous great epic that offers the essence of Yoga, and of all sciences for that matter, through gripping narratives and legends. A very bold assertion is made in the book towards the end:

dharme cārthe ca kāme ca mokṣe ca bharatarṣabha /
yadihāsti tadanyatra yannehāsti na tat kvacit //[3]

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[1] Vivekananda, Swami, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Vol-6, Mayavati, October 1994 (Sixth Reprint of Subsidized Edition) pp. 123-124.

[2] Vivekananda, Swami, The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Vol-1, Mayavati, October 1994 (Sixth Reprint of Subsidized Edition) p. 27.

[3] Sukthankar, Vishnu S. and S.K. Belvalkar, editors. The Mahābhārata.Vol-19, 18.5.38 (Svargārohaṇaparva), Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 7th September 1959.

- 'In religion, prosperity, happiness, and Spiritual emancipation whatever one finds here may be found elsewhere and that which is not here is not existent anywhere either'.

Tales and stories of this colossal epic present a vast array of archetypes of men and women for the survey. Proper scrutiny and analysis of the roles offer elaborate lessons in ethics and morals. Episodes in lively succession capture the mind and leave an indelible imprint on the soul. Even a casual reader seldom escapes smile, laughter, wonder, tears and horripilation as he reads on. Author, the venerable sage Vyāsa, has exercised marvellous skills in the portrayal of characters. Extreme care is bestowed in communication of the intended lessons. The subliminal impact generated is too compelling to be ignored. And hence it is rightly declared:

bhāratādhyayanāt puṇyādapi pādamadhīyataḥ /
śraddadhānasya pūyante sarvapāpāṇyaśeṣataḥ // [4]

- The study of sacred Mahābhārata, even done in part, completely destroys all sins of the reader endowed with faith and conviction.

A thorough study of this scripture imparts wisdom and prepares the soul for Spiritual ascent and emancipation. It also deepens understanding of human nature and opens eyes to the far reaching implications of the seemingly insignificant passing events of life.

Definitions of Character And Their Implications

Lexicon defines character as **"the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual"** [5] Wise men of all times have accorded prime importance to conduct. Saints and philosophers too have given much thought to this topic. Definitions of character given by them are deeply significant and practical. Their words serve as a beacon, bring hope, enhance enthusiasm and help build noble character.

1. Gautama Buddha

Words of Gautama Buddha as treasured in the Dhammapada, of the Pali Buddhist Canon, run thus:

> We are what we think.
> All that we are arises with our thoughts.
> With our thoughts we make the world.
> Speak or act with an impure mind
> And trouble will follow you
> As the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.[6]

These words are direct and convincing in style and show how character is made. Simple truths often appear complicated and difficult due to the crookedness of heart. Give up pretence and the reality stands vividly before the mental eye. Take a moment out from the daily chores to watch your motives, and you will realize the how and why of episodes of your life. You will be astonished to realize the direct connection between conduct and destiny. First step towards character formation, therefore, is to realize this simple truth that it is you who shape your own life. Until this fact is brought home you keep blaming external factors for the circumstances and vicissitudes of life. Stop blaming others and then begins the ascent towards perfection. This very idea resounded in the words of another prophet thus: "Take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders, and know that you are the creator of your own destiny."[7]

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[4] **Sukthankar,** Vishnu S. **and S.K. Belvalkar,** editors. The *Mahābhārata*. Vol-19, 18.5.44. (Svargārohaṇaparva), Poona, Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, 7th September 1959.

[5] **Lexico powered** by **Oxford** (an online dictionary) Link: https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/character

[6] **Dhammapada** translation by Thomas Byrom. Source internet: https://quoteinvestigator.com/2013/01/10/watchyour- thoughts

2. Aristotle

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher of the classical period in Ancient Greece was a prolific writer who wrote on varied topics – mathematics, chemistry, politics, aesthetics, astronomy, physics, metaphysics, philosophy, religion, and what not. We may consider here two of his sayings on character.

Definition 1:

"Our characters are the result of our conduct."[8]

Character is the result and conduct is the cause. The result can be altered by suitable changes made in the cause. If a man can exercise his faculties to upgrade the elements of the cause corresponding effects are bound to follow. This declares, therefore, that no man is doomed forever. Conscientious monitoring of conduct can give an upward turn at any point of time in man's life. After all it is conduct that decides character. Word precedes deed, and thought precedes the word. Noble thought, thus, becomes a key to noble character. This drives home the significance of the Ṛgvedic prayer - ā no bhadrāḥ kratavo yantu viśvataḥ[9] - 'May noble thoughts come to us from everywhere.'

Definition 2 :

"One who faces and who fears the right things and from the right motive, in the right way and at the right time, possesses character worthy of our trust and admiration."

Strong emphasis is laid here on propriety of things. Men pursue different goals, work in different capacities, but only a few are crowned with success; fewer still attain peace and bliss. Why not all ? Lack of right attitude, defective means and improper timing explain this says Aristotle. Things done in proper manner are bound to bring desired results. Mahābhārata puts it thus:

tapo na kalko'dhyayanaṃ na kalkaḥ svābhāviko
vedavidhirna kalkaḥ /
prasahya vittāharaṇaṃ na kalkastānyeva
bhāvopahatāni kalkaḥ // [10]

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[7] Vivekananda, Swami, ***The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.*** **Vol-2,** Mayavati, October 1994 (Sixth Reprint of Subsidized Edition) p. 225.

[8] **From internet:** https://whatwillmatter.com/2013/10/quotations-character-reputation-character-education-bestquotes- ever/

[9] **Ṛgveda-saṃhitā** 1.89.1

[10] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S**. and **S.K. Belvalkar, editors.** *The Mahābhārata,* Vol-1, 1.1.210 (Anukramaṇīparva), Poona, Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute,7th September 1959.

- "Austerity is not a sin, study (of scriptures) is not a sin, work enjoined by the Vedas natural to one's station of life is not sin, aggressive attempts at acquisition of wealth is not a sin either – but all of these become sinful if the motive behind is corrupt."

3. Heraclitus

Heraclitus, a pre-Socratic philosopher of Ephesus said:

> *"Good character is not formed in a week or a month. It is created little by little, day by day. Protracted and patient effort is needed to develop good character."*[11]

How true it is! 'Time is money' is the catchphrase going the rounds now. Men, today, expect instant results. But they forget that patience is the cost of exalted benefits. Even in mundane life things are to be accomplished gradually and not in haste says a familiar Sanskrit adage:

śanaiḥ kanthāḥ śanaiḥ panthāḥ
śanaiḥ parvatalanghanam/
śanairvidyā śanairvittaṃ pañcaitāni
śanaiḥ śanaiḥ//

- Sewing, travelling, crossing of mountain, learning and earning – these five should be done slowly. Haste in these not only makes waste, but may also prove positively harmful. Impulsive action often brings unwanted consequences. Keeping with the natural pace of things is a golden rule in achieving sublime goals and lasting benefits. Hence it is rightly said – "Upon ages of struggle a character is built."[12]

4. Lao Tze (Lao Tzu/ Laozi)

Lao Tze, the ancient Chinese philosopher and writer who founded Taoism said:

"Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny."[13]

Another familiar version of this maxim is "Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny."[14]

5. Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda, harbinger of the new age, bestowed much thought on character building and personality development. Endeavours remain incomplete without the study of those prophetic words. Basic definition given by

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[11] **From internet:** https://whatwillmatter.com/2013/10/quotations-character-reputation-character-education-bestquotes- ever/

[12] Vivekananda, Swami, The **Complete Works** of Swami **Vivekananda.** Vol-5, Mayavati,October 1994 (Sixth Reprint Of Subsidized Edition) p.57.

[13] **Refer: https:**//quoteinvestigator.com/2013/01/10/watch-your-thoughts/

[14] **Stephen Covey** quotes this in his famous book The seven habits of highly effective people on page 54. There is no consensus of opinion about the authorship of this quote. Apart from Lao Tzu Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frank Jackson outlaw, Stephen Covey and others are credited with varied versions of this familiar saying. Visit: https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/227780-sow-a-thought-reap-an-action-sow-an-action-reap

Swamiji is that character "is the aggregate of tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind"[15]. Below are two more passages: one related to microcosm - individual man, and the other to macrocosm.

Definition 1:

> *"If you really want to judge the character of a man, look not at his great performances. Every fool may become a hero at one time or another. Watch a man do his most common actions; those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man. Great occasions rouse even the lowest of human beings to some kind of greatness, but he alone is the really great man whose character is great always, the same wherever he be.*[16]

The natural lifestyle, the day to day activities show what a man actually is. The cloak of gentleness and politeness that man puts on in public view is only a superficial form of civility and that cannot be the correct reading of his true character. In the Mahābhārata we see how Kauravas pretended to be noble before the public, but remained malicious at heart; Dhṛtarāṣṭra doted on his sons but pretended to be impartial to the sons of Pāṇḍu. Thus Kauravas grievously lacked the strength of character. Duryodhana and his comrades, stubborn and incorrigible, rejected all wise counsel. Hypocrisy and nefariousness took them over and paved the way for their doom towards which they, in spite of themselves, were driven by their own baser proclivities.

Definition 2 :

> *"Karma in its effect on character is the most tremendous power than man has to deal with. Man is, as it were, a centre, and is attracting all the powers of the universe towards himself, and in this centre is fusing them all and again sending them off in a big current. Such a centre is the real man--the almighty, the omniscient--and he draws the whole universe towards him. Good and bad, misery and happiness, all are running towards him and clinging round him; and out of them he fashions the mighty stream of tendency called character and throws it outwards. As he has the power of drawing in anything, so has he the power of throwing it out. All the actions that we see in the world, all the movements in human society, all the works that we have around us, are simply the display of thought, the manifestation of the will of man. Machines or instruments, cities, ships, or men-of-war, all these are simply the manifestation of the will of man; and this will is caused by character, and character is manufactured by Karma.*[17]

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[15] Vivekananda, Swami, **The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Vol-1,** Mayavati, October 1994(Sixth Reprint Of Subsidized Edition)p. 27.

[16] Vivekananda, Swami, **The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Vol-1,** Mayavati,October 1994 (Sixth Reprint Of Subsidized Edition)p. 29.

[17] Vivekananda, Swami, **The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda. Vol-1,** Mayavati,October 1994 (Sixth Reprint Of Subsidized Edition) pp. 29-30.

This is a great truth. Man is the crux of the universe. How man and world influence each other is a science in itself. Glad tidings is that man is the master of his life. He is free and capable to change the course of his life, if he wishes to do so. Surroundings affect the growth of a being is a well known fact; but man also can affect, monitor and modify surroundings is a less known truth. Conscientious work can alter the course of life and yield desired results. Ultimately the onus, therefore, rests on the man's shoulder and the key to success lies in his own hands. Realization of this fact marks the beginning of self-improvement. This is what is familiarly known as the Karma theory in Indian scriptures. Mahābhārata is a great aid in understanding such basic tenets of Indian life and philosophy.

Mahābhārata

Mahābhārata, the gigantic epic, is an all-in-one scripture of Hindus. It is well-nigh impossible to categorize or rate it as belonging to one particular genre. Epithets such as *itihāsa* (history), *nītiśāstra* (science of ethics), and *mokṣaśāstra* (scripture of Spiritual emancipation) even when put together fail to completely describe the epic and what to speak of in segregation. Mahābhārata is all these and much more, for, it contains all branches of learning. It is also a great scripture of character building. Character denoted in Sanskrit as cāritryam or śīlam is defined in several sections of the epic. For instance:

Definition 1 (śīlam)

adrohaḥ sarvabhūteṣu karmaṇā manasā girā/
anugrahaśca dānaṃ ca śīlametatpraśasyate//[18]

'Absence of cruelty towards all beings in thought, word and deed, benevolence and philanthropy – all put together is what is called Character.'

This is a totally different type of definition. Here there is no advice of vigilance, no warning of adverse consequences, no mention of self-restraint, nor there is a teaching of piety, propriety and the like. Kindness and magnanimity instead are posited as constituents of character, and they encompass all desirable traits of a noble character. 'Vigilance', 'abstinence' are all preliminary moral exercises while 'kindness' and 'benevolence' are superior ethics that govern all moral codes. They embrace in their ambit all laws of morality and hence no separate mention is made of the lower attributes in the definition. Thus, all definitions of character are contained in this super definition. Practice of absence of cruelty towards all beings in all ways means by implication, extreme carefulness in thought word and deed. If you wish not to hurt any being in any way at any point of time that necessitates extreme carefulness. This vigilance is what helps form character according to Lao Tze who said "Watch your thoughts, they become your words; ...." Kind man perforce does the right things, in right way, at the right time and with the right motive.

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[18] **Sukthankar,Vishnu S.** and **S.K. Belvalkar, editors.** The *Mahābhārata*, Vol-13, 12.124.64. (śāntiparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint)

Kindness presides over all moral rules and values. Righteousness or propriety bereft of kindness is not worth the name.

Yudhiṣṭhira, in Mahābhārata was a repository of all noble features of an exalted character.

He lived by the principle of kindness unconditional and shone as a man of exemplary character. Once when Pāṇḍavas were in *Dvaita* forest Yudhiṣṭhira encountered a Yakṣha in the form of a crane who had done away with his four brothers. The Yakṣha compelled Yudhiṣṭhira by the force of circumstances to answer a series of questions on religion, ethics and the like. The noble son of Pāṇḍu passed the interrogation with flying colours and towards the end declared: ānṛśaṃsyaṃ paro dharmaḥ paramārthācca me matam/[19] - 'I consider kindness as the lofty ideal, greater even to the Supreme Goal (beatitude) of life'. Yakṣha, who was none other than the god of righteousness and ethics in disguise, was touched by those words and released all his four brothers caught in the death trap set by him with purpose. Again, towards the end in the great ascent to heaven, Yudhiṣṭhira proved his worth exceedingly well. When all brothers with Draupadī fell dead he followed by one faithful dog went on bravely. King of gods, Indra, appeared before him and advised him to abandon the mundane creature before getting into the celestial chariot he had brought for him. Yudhiṣṭhira firmly said - ānṛśaṃsyā hi me matiḥ - 'My mind is imbued with kindness.' Those immortal words are:

ayaṃ śvā bhūtabhavyeśa bhakto māṃ nityameva ha/
sa gaccheta mayā sārdhamānṛśaṃsyā hi me matiḥ//[20]

- 'O lord of the past and future! This dog who is indeed always devoted to me shall go along with me (to heaven), for, my mind is imbued with kindness.'

With these words he refused Indra's offer, but did not forsake the dog and passed the second test kept by the god of righteousness and ethics. Finally when he chose to suffer with his brothers in the hell instead of going alone to heaven, he was certified for his firmness in righteousness for the third time. The presiding deity of righteousness himself proclaimed: na śakyase cālayituṃ svabhāvāt pārtha hetubhiḥ//[21] 'O son of Pṛthā! It is impossible to divert you from your (righteous) nature by force of conditions or reasons.' Under all conditions Yudhiṣṭhira remained kind through and through.

Thus Kindness was supreme to him and it was unconditional. This idea is taught in the epic repeatedly in different ways. In the Anuśāsanaparva it is said: 'The chief characteristic of Dharma in the benevolent is compassion. Compassion is always delightful for the benevolent. - anukrośo hi sādhūnāṃ mahaddharmasya lakṣaṇam/ anukrośaśca sādhūnāṃ sadā prītiṃ prayacchati//'[22] The truth also is defined in terms of kindness: yad bhūtahitamatyantaṃ tadvai satyaṃ paraṃ matam//[23] 'Whatever is conducive to ultimate good of beings that indeed is prime truth' says the butcher sage (dharmavyādha) in the section on forest episodes. Thus, according to Mahābhārata kindness unconditional is the basis of noble character.

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[19] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S.** and **S.K. Belvalkar, editors.** The Mahābhārata, Vol-4, 3.297.71 (Araṇyaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint).

[20] **Ibid.,** 17.3.7 (Mahāprasthānikaparva)

[21] **Ibid.,** 18.8.30 (Svargārohaṇaparva)

Definition 2 (āryaśīlaṃ)

na vairamuddīpayati praśāntaṃ na
darpamāropati nāstameti/
na durgato'smīti karotyanāryaṃ tamāryaśīlaṃ
paramāhurāryāḥ//[24]

- 'One who does not rake up the enmity that has subsided; he who does not get puffed up nor become dejected, and he who does not resort to ignoble ways on the pretext of adversity – he is designated by noble men as eminent among men of noble conduct.'

Definition 3 (Satpuruṣāryaśīlaḥ)

na svesukhe vai kurute praharṣaṃ nānyasya
duḥkhe bhavati prahṛṣṭaḥ /
datvā na paścāt kurute'nutāpaṃ sa kathyate
satpuruṣāryaśīlaḥ //[25]

'That man is considered as good and possessed of noble conduct who does not revel in one's own happiness, not take delight in the misery of others, and not feel remorse after an act of philanthropy.'

These three definitions put together gives a checklist of guidelines for formation of a noble character:

1) Do not hurt any being in any way (in thought, word or deed)
2) Be benevolent and readily obliging
3) Practise philanthropy – give what you have: wealth, knowledge, love, moral support, or kind words
4) Do not rake up enmity that has died down
5) Don't get puffed up
6) Never feel depressed
7) Never resort to improper ways even when going through difficult and trying times
8) Do not revel in your own happiness
9) Do not take delight in others' misery and affliction
10) Don't feel remorse after making a gift

Among the above ten rules eight are in the negative. It shows by implication how abstinence from improper things forms the first step towards character building. And it is rightly so; vile propensities in man die hard. Its like removing dross from the core before things can be fashioned out of it. It also explains why wise men have mostly defined character in terms of vigilance against improper acts.

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[22] anukrośaḥ dayā. The text and the meaninig is from Mahābhārata, with the **Bhāratakaumudī gloss by Haridasasiddhanta-vagisha Bhattacharya,** Vol. 38, 4. 24 p 66, Vishwa Vani Prakashani, Kolkata, Bengali Year 1384 (ie.1977)

[23] **Ibid.,** 3.203.42 (Araṇyaparva)

[24] **Ibid.,** Vol-6, 5.33.93. (Udyogaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016(Reprint)

[25] **Ibid.,** Vol-6, 5.33.94. (Udyogaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint)

Best Constituents of Personality

Strength and stability of a building depend on the standard of materials used in its construction. Similarly the super structure of character depends on the building blocks used in its formation. And what are they? The three constituents, known as guṇas[26], of Prakṛti or the primordial nature - Sattva, Rajas and Tamas - form the basic building blocks of everything in this universe. It is said:

na tadasti pṛthivyāṃ vā divi deveṣu vā punaḥ/
sattvaṃ prakṛtijairmuktaṃ yadebhiḥ
syāt tribhirguṇaiḥ//[27]

There is no entity in this world or among the gods in heaven, which is devoid of these three constituents of Prakṛti.

Detailed treatment of the three elementary constituents of nature can be found in the chapters of Bhīṣmaparva which form the celebrated śrīmad-Bhagavadgītā. These three strands of the fabric of nature account for the how and why of all products – the beings in the universe. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas affect personality in all its phases, and hence a thorough knowledge of them is inevitable for character formation or personality development in the truest sense of the term. Proper acquaintance with these elements enables you to make efforts in the right direction and in a fruitful way.

Rajas represents action, tamas inertia and sattva the balance of both. Sattva leads to knowledge, Rajas to greed, and Tamas breeds error, delusion and ignorance. Sattva, due to clarity, is luminous and tranquil. It binds the soul with happiness and knowledge. Rajas is of the nature of passion and is the cause of craving and attachment. It binds the soul with attachment to work. Tamas is born of ignorance and deludes all embodied beings. It binds the soul with error, sloth and slumber. These attributes or guṇas of nature decide the quality of thought, word and deed of any individual. Hence, they are directly linked to personality development and character formation. Based on the proportion of these elements men are classified into three types – the best or sāttvika type, mediocre or rājasika type, and the lowest or tāmasika type. Faculties of men vary according to the ratio of these constituents in the personality. The more the sāttva the more perfect the man will be. The ideal however is to attain to the highest and the best, the sāttvika type in everything - in knowledge, work, sense of agency, intellect, fortitude, bliss, food, work, and austerity. You should keep in view the features of the Sattva prototype to achieve perfection. Persistent, diligent effort in cultivation of sattva ensures the manifestation of the best elements in personality. It is, however, much beneficial to know the lower types as well. A clear knowledge of what is to be eschewed helps you focus on what is to be achieved. Further, in all endeavours, honest assessment of the current actual status provides the solid ground for working up the way in a realistic manner.

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[26] **Literally** 'attributes' or 'qualities'

[27] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.40

Knowledge

sarvabhūteṣu yenaikaṃ bhāvamavyayamīkṣate/
avibhaktaṃ vibhakteṣu tajñānaṃ viddhi sāttvikam//[28]

- 'That knowledge is of the Sattva type - the best – by which one sees a single, undecaying, undivided principle in all the diversified manifestations.'

That knowledge is mediocre, of Rajas, which sees manifested things as distinct, different, multipartite, owing to incapacity to see through things. That knowledge is of the lowest type, of Tamas, which conceives a speck as the whole due to narrowed, irrational and delusive vision.

Work

niyataṃ saṅgarahitamarāgadveṣataḥ kṛtam/
aphalaprepsunā karma yattatsāttvikamucyate//[29]

'Duty, done without clinging to it, without passion or aversion by one who seeks no rewards thereof is said to be of the Sattva type - the best.'

Strenuous deeds performed by the egoistic who hankers after results are said to be mediocre, rājasika. Acts done out of delusion, without consideration of consequences, loss, harm, and strengths and weaknesses is said to be of the worst type - tāmasika.

Doer/Agent

muktasaṅgo'nahaṃ vādī dhṛtyutsāhasamanvitaḥ/
siddhyasiddhyornirvikāraḥ karttā sāttvika ucyate/

- 'He who works being free from attachment, egoism, endowed with fortitude and fervour, and not affected by success or failure is said to be of the Sattva type - the best.'

He who is passionate, desirous of results, greedy, cruel, unclean and susceptible to joy and sorrow is a mediocre worker - constituted of Rajas. He who is unsteady, untrained, stubborn, deceitful, wicked, lazy, dejected and delaying is the worst worker - constituted of Tamas.

Intellect

pravṛttiṃ ca nivṛttiṃ ca kāryākārye bhayābhaye/
bandhaṃ mokṣaṃ ca yā vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī//[30]

- 'O Son of Pṛthā, that intellect which knows when to act and when to desist, what to do and what not to, the source of fear and security, bondage and freedom - is said to be the best - sāttvika.'

That intellect which wrongly understands virtue and vice, dos and don'ts is mediocre - rājasika. That which covered by ignorance considers vice as a virtue and all things contrary to reality is the worst type of intellingence - *tāmasika)*

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[28] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.20
[29] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.23
[30] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.30

Fortitude

dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate manaḥprāṇendriyakriyāḥ/
yogenāvyabhicāriṇyā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī//

- 'O Son of Pṛthā, that fortitude which is stabilized by Yoga (concentration) and by which one sustains functions of the mind, vital forces and organs is of the best type - sāttvika.'

The fortitude by which one hold on to duties, cherished objects and wealth by being desirous of rewards wherever possible is of the mediocre type - rājasika. The fortitude by which a man of defective intellect refuses to give up sleep, fear, grief, depression, and sensuality is of the worst type - tāmasika

Bliss

abhyāsādramate yatra duḥkhāntaṃ ca nigacchati//
yattadagre viṣamiva pariṇāme'mṛtopamam/
tatsukhaṃ sāttvikaṃ proktamātmabuddhiprasādajam//[31]

'That which is like poison in the beginning but turns nectarine at the end, born of clarity in understanding, puts an end to misery, and which is enjoyed habitually (not impulsively) is the best type of happiness - sāttvika.'

The bliss got from contact of organs and sense objects which feels like ambrosia in the beginning but turns poisonous at the end is of the mediocre type - rājasika. That joy is of the worse kind - tāmasika, which deludes man both in the beginning and at the end and arises from slumber, sloth and inadvertence.

Food

āyuḥsattvabalārogyasukhaprītivivardhanāḥ/
rasyāḥ snigdhāḥ sthirā hṛdyā āhārāḥ sāttvikapriyāḥ//[32]

- 'Foods that enhance longevity, vigour, strength, health, happiness, delight, and are succulent, oily, stable, and pleasing are liked by the best of men - the sāttvika.' (And hence such are the best foods)

Foods that are bitter, sour, salty, very hot, pungent, dry, burning, and cause pain, suffering and disease are dear to the mediocre – rājasika. That which is not fresh, dried up, stinking, stale, left out, and unfit to be offered in worship - are relished by the lowest of men - tāmasika.

Worship

aphalākāṅkṣibhiryajño vidhidṛṣṭo na ijyate/
yaṣtavyameveti manaḥ samādhāya sa sāttvika//[33]

-'Worship performed in accordance with scriptural injunctions by men who seek not the results, and are imbued with the conviction that it ought to be done is of the best type - the sāttvika.' Worship performed with a set purpose, and for show is mediocre - rājasika. Worship performed without faith and reverence, contrary to injunctions, devoid of food distribution, lacking in mantras and gifts to priests is the worst of its kind - tāmasika)

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[31] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.36-37

[32] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 17.8

[33] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 17.11

Austerities

What is austerity? Austerity simply means discipline - physical, verbal and mental. It is not necessary that to be austere you should retire into the woods or sit down without food and sleep in self mortification. Austerity in the true sense means disciplining of the faculties for the sake of achieving some noble and beneficial goal. Scriptures say - manasaścendriyāṇāṃ ca hyaikāgryaṃ paramaṃ tapaḥ/[34] - 'Concentration of mind and senses is the ultimate austerity.' Success in any endeavour depends on the rigour and discipline kept up in the enterprise. In the context of personality development or character building discipline means the training of the body, mind and speech. How to discipline these three dimensions of personality? Mahābhārata offers the steps:

Physical

devadvijaguruprājñapūjanaṃ śaucamārjavam/
brahmacaryamahiṃsā ca śārīraṃ tapa ucyat//[35]

- 'Worship of gods, reverence to the twice-borns[36], elders, and the wise, cleanliness, celibacy, and non-injury are bodily discipline.'

Verbal

anudvegakaraṃ vākyaṃ satyaṃ priyahitaṃ ca yat/
svādhyāyābhyasanaṃ caiva vāṅmayaṃ tapa ucyate//[37]

- 'Discipline of speech consists in the speaking of the words that are non-agitating, true, agreeable, and beneficial, and practice of the study of the scriptures.'

Mental

manaḥprasādaḥ saumyatvaṃ maunamātmavinigrahaḥ/
bhāvasaṃśuddhirityetat tapo mānasamucyate//[38]

- 'Serenity of mind, cheerfulness, silence, subdual of mind, and purity of intentions – these form the discipline of mind.'

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[34] **Shri Shankarabhagavatpada,** ***Upanisadbhasyam:*** With the Commentaries of **Shri Anandagiri Acharya** edited by S.Subrahmanyashastri M.A. Vol-1 (For the First Eight Upanishads), (भृगुवल्ली.अनुवाक् १), Varanasi, Shri Dakshinamurti Math Prakashana, 2011.

[35] **Gita Chapter** 17.14

[36] 'Twice-borns' means men of the three upper castes in the Hindu society. They undergo thorough training under a mentor in sciences (śāstras) and spiritual disciplines by the virtue of which they take a new birth, as it were, in eminence and noble conduct, and hence the name 'twice-born'. Thus it is the eminence in knowledge and noble conduct that is signified by the term 'twice-born' and not the mere caste.

[37] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 17.15

[38] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 17.16

This threefold discipline - of body, speech and mind - is again of three types – sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. The best type is defined thus:

śraddhayā parayā taptaṃ tapastat trividhaṃ naraiḥ/
aphalākāṅkṣibhiryuktaiḥ sāttvikaṃ paricakṣate//[39]

- 'The threefold discipline (physical, verbal and mental) mentioned above when taken up with paramount conviction by those who do not seek rewards and are self-controlled - is called the best discipline, sāttvika.'

Austerity performed ostentatiously for fame, honour, and adoration is mediocre - rājasika - which is temporal, unstable, and ephemeral. The discipline that is foolish, involves infliction of pain on oneself or meant for the sake of destruction of others is said to be the lowest - tāmasika.

These parameters help build up character in the best possible way. The more often refer back to these the more perfection you will be able to achieve.

Now before proceeding to pick up lessons from the wonderful episodes of the epic the modern reader needs to heed a word of caution.

Word of Caution

In the academic milieu today you need to steer clear of the callous western critques of characters in the epic. Academicians with intentions not so good and ulterior motives lurking behind fail to do any justice to our holy texts. Uninformed, rather ill-informed, savants from other parts of the globe, have often handled sacred Hindu texts in a reckless, unscrupulous manner, discrediting in the bargain, their own academic credibility and nobility. Notwithstanding such onslaughts, the epic has grown in its influence among the intelligensia. Mahābhārata is haunting, as it were, to the minds of indology professors, which is why they repeatedly essay to show down its greatness and grandeur. Their constant hunt for flaws, and eagerness at picking holes betray the unshakeable, overwhelming influence the massive classic has had on them down the ages. The more the evasive they become in acknowledging its splendour the more credit points they remit, unawares, in its favour. The kernel contained in the monumental epic speaks for itself and needs no testimony from earthlings to bear out its worth. And when you say this it is neither complacency nor retroversion, it is the grace and repose derived on the ground of sound facts. Here reasoning, analyses, deliberations are all welcome, in as much as they are free from prejudice and academic bigotry. Lack of comprehensive outlook, and reading of the text out of context have been at the root of all mischief committed by the apathetic indologists. The proper critical assessment made in line with the central theme of the epic shall, however, reveal perfect tenability of characters achieved by the genius Vyāsa. Erratic vision and absurd treatment of the narratives have often covered the true sheen and splendour of Mahābhārata from the eyes of foreign readers. Words of V.S. Sukthankar in defence of the protagonist roles are noteworthy and memorable; they set the right perspective needed to derive the best from the colossal work:

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[39] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 17.17

It is indeed true that the Pāṇḍavas make themselves guilty of some slight breaches of pugilistic conventions in the course of the long drawn out and bitter war of annihilation fought out on the plains of Kurukṣetra. Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa and Duryodhana are all killed in the war by subterfuges of tricks which violate the strict code of chivalrous and knightly combats. But the Kauravas are just as unscrupulous, if not indeed more so; only they are discreet and diplomatic in the extreme. Their "sins," as Hopkins has pointed out, smack of cultivated wickedness. They secretly try to burn their enemies alive. They seek to waylay and kill the ambassador of the Pāṇḍavas. They form a conspiracy and send out ten men under oath (Saṃśaptakas) to attack Arjuna. They slay Arjuna's son first in order to weaken Arjuna's heart. Are these dark deeds worthy of models of royal and knightly honour? The truth is that the Kauravas are crafty and designing; they are shrewd enough not to break the smaller laws of propriety. They plot in secret, hiding their deceitfulness under an ostentatious cloak of justice and benevolence. They sin at heart, and present to the world a smiling and virtuous face. The Pāṇḍavas are on the other hand represented throughout as being truly ingenious and guileless. They do "sin": they are human for that. But their "sins" are palpably overt and markedly evident. The Kauravas are sanctimonious hypocrites; the wrath and animosity of the grossly outraged Pāṇḍavas stare us in the face.[40]

The Beacon

Swami Vivekananda's words serve as a beacon here:

> *In speaking of the Mahabharata to you, it is simply impossible for me to present the unending array of the grand and majestic characters of the mighty heroes depicted by the genius and master-mind of Vyasa. The internal conflicts between righteousness and filial affection in the mind of the god-fearing, yet feeble, old, blind King Dhritarashtra; the majestic character of the grandsire Bhishma; the noble and virtuous character of the royal Yudhishthira, and of the other four brothers, as mighty in valour as in devotion and loyalty; the peerless character of Krishna, unsurpassed in human wisdom; and not less brilliant, the characters of the women--the stately queen Gandhari, the loving mother Kunti, the everdevoted and all-suffering Draupadi--these and hundreds of other characters of this Epic and those of the Ramayana have been the cherished heritage of the whole Hindu world for the last several thousands of years and form the basis of their thoughts and of their moral and ethical ideas. In fact, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are the two encyclopaedias of the ancient Aryan life and wisdom, portraying an ideal civilisation which humanity has yet to aspire after.*[41]

How Can A Book Be A Trainer ?

The splendid fabric of the epic in its infinite folds of delicately woven tales, interwoven with subtales and parables, enshrines pearls of wisdom - lessons for all stations of life. It abounds in morals and values. The Situations faced by all beings - a servant to a monarch, a common man to a perfected sage - are depicted in the monumental work in different shades of philosophical nuances. Son, daughter, guest, housewife, servant, butcher, minister, king, friend, priest, recluse, teacher, trader, hunter - all find occasions to identify themselves with the epic characters. Each role represents an archetype. Close study of the characters gives lessons in dos and dont's. As a thoughful reader, you are bound to find some role in some episode that fits into your current situation in life. When you develop a keen sense of understanding of factors leading to the consequences stories become mentors. All that you need is an open mind, reverential attitude and deep involvement and identification with the roles while reading. When you learn to put your heart and soul into the study, live the episodes and feel the pulse of the roles, you receive the impact generated by the narrative and then books become teachers. Such a study of Mahābhārata cultures your heart, trains the mind, sharpens the intellect, prepares the ground for character building, and bolsters the soul in its onward journey towards perfection. This is what is wished for and this actually has been the method of mass education in the national life of India. Sister Nivedita's keen observation in this regard is noteworthy:

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[40] **Sukthankar** V.S., On The Meaning of The Mahābhārata, The Asiatic Society of Bombay, Bombay-1, 1957 p.17

[41] **Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda Vol.4,** pp. 100-101

> *What philosophy by itself could never have done for the humble, what the laws of Manu have done only in some small measure for the few, that the Epics have done through unnumbered ages and are doing still for all classes alike. They are the perpetual Hinduisers, for they are the ideal embodiments of that form of life, that conception of conduct, of which laws and theories can give but the briefest abstract, yet towards which the hope and effort of every Hindu child must be directed.*[42]

Therefore read conscientiously and you imbibe the spirit of the narrative, essence of the scripture, and your soul grows in wisdom. You will acquire strength of character required to play your role in life. Your learning gets translated into action, and your knowledge will be borne out by conduct leading to a sublime fulfillment in life. This is the unique feature of the Hindu system of education – learning and practice form an integral whole of the process. According to the sages of yore academics devoid of character is worthless, and learning deprived of application in day-today life is purposeless. Thus, in the holy land of Bhārata (India) study and character-building go hand in hand. Yudhiṣṭhira spoke of this in the Mahābhārata in the episode on Yakṣapraśna:

paṭhakāḥ pāṭhakāścaiva ye cānye śāstracintakāḥ /
sarve vyasanino mūrkhā yaḥ kriyāvān sa paṇḍitaḥ //[43]

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[42] **Nivedita,** Sister, *The* ***Web of Indian Life:*** *With an Introduction by Rabindranath Tagore.* Mayavati, Advaita Ashram, June 2004, p. 129

[43] This oft quoted verse is said to be found in Chapter 297 of Prof. Tokunaga's files. Source internet: https://sanskritdocuments.org/doc_z_misc_major_works/yaxa.html?lang=sa

- 'Readers, teachers, and professors who deliberate on scriptures (or sciences) are all obsessive fools. Only he who puts to practice what he learns is a scholar.'

The verse sounds harsh, but conveys the vital truth! People intent only upon book learning are dismissed as maniacs. They are unproductive, book worms. Alongside academics the verse calls for a relentless pursuit of self-development, behavioural improvement on the part of both the teacher and the taught.

Well, now how to begin with the character building? You may prepare an inventory of the virtues you wish to cultivate, and the elements you wish to eliminate - the actual things to be practised in daily life. Make a study of the epitomes of those virtues in the episodes of the Mahabharata. That will be a humble beginning of character building. Keen understanding of the tales coupled with contemplation on the import will help the soul metamorphose into what it aspires to become. Formation of character does not necessitate intellectual gifts, it demands rather, a receptive mind, heart free from crookedness, tenacity, patience and sincerity of purpose.

The Three Fundamentals

A perceptive study of the Mahābhārata reveals three fundamental things which are essential to all who aspire after an exalted character. They are:

1. Following the dictates of conscience
2. Service to the wise
3. Concern for others

These three demand prime attention. They are the kingpins of the sophisticated machinery of character. Inadvertence in these renders attempts at self-development abortive. Mahābhārata emphasizes, therefore, these essentials repeatedly through various episodes, in several ways, and with extraordinary skill. Once the basics are taken care of, you may rest assured of the result. Desirable virtues and all noble qualities will harmoniously align around the central core of your personality to form an integral whole if you are sound in these basics.

Following the dictates of conscience

Everyone has a divine element within which speaks out the right thing at the right time. It guides the soul towards Light and Bliss. But overpowered by the glitz and glamour of the sense pleasures men often shun the inner voice and drift away with the downstream of propensities. Unwillingness to listen to the inner voice is the cause of all unpleasant consequences. Men seldom realize this truth. Each time they ignore the inner voice they dearly pay the price for that but do not understand the how and why of it. Soon they forget it all and repeat the mistake over and over again and as a consequence lose the sensitivity to perceive it. Eventually they grow so hard and coarse that they hardly hear any inner voice at all. The divine within – the ringing of the inner voice, however, is very much present all the while; it never dies out, for, it is the central core of the being. Then why do men ignore the inner dictate? They are enticed! The culprit is another call that also comes from within, mingled up with the divine voice. It is the throbbing of the lower self. It prods men on the primrose path. It offers immediate sense satisfaction. Caught in its magical spell, men, lose their sense and make a nuisance of themselves. They readily succumb to the profane. Whereas the wise differentiate the divine ringing from the baser beat. Men, mostly, cares their lower self and care less the divine call. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana and the like epitomize this type. They all end up in grief; it is a time tested truth. Their soul remains engrossed in the ephemeral glitter and dazzle of the tinsel world until they are brought to senses by some severe blow in life. That is the hard way by which the masses learn the lesson. They could easily avoid all the hell of bitter experiences by abiding by the inner divinity. Alas, who understands this? The divine voice lacks fascination and hence the common run of men run behind the worthless. The vigilent, however, see the beatitude hidden in the counsel of the inner self, follow its dictates, and find the land of Light and Bliss. Such men are a rarity and hence it is declared:

manuṣyāṇāṃ sahasreṣu kaścideyatati siddhaye/
yatatāmapi siddhānāṃ kaścinmāṃ vetti tattvataḥ//[44]

One in thousands strives for perfection. Even among the perfected who try only the exceptional one knows me in reality.

How to distinguish between the divine and the mundane voice? Peace is the touchstone! Peace reigns when you obey the divine call. Serenity and clarity of thought follow you when you follow the divine instruction. On the other hand, restlessness and agitation build up when you begin to collaborate with the baser pulse. When the lower self calls there is no spontaneity in its ringing, it is the whining of the tendencies pent up within and seeking an outlet. That voice disturbs you and muddles up your thinking. Instead of leading you to peace the lower self rather pulls you to pieces. The divine on the other hand is spontaneous, convincing and needs no testimony for its veracity. Take refuge, therefore, in that divine self seated within, says the Lord:

īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ hṛddeśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati/
bhrāmayan sarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā//
tameva śaraṇaṃ gaccha sarvabhāvena bhārata/
tatprasādāt parāṃ śāntiṃ sthānaṃ prāpsyasi śāśvatam//[45]

O Arjuna! The Ruler (īśvaraḥ) is present in the region of the heart of all creatures, spinning them mounted on a machine through Māyā! O Scion of Bharata dynasty! By all means take refuge in Him alone. By His grace you will attain to supreme peace and the eternal Abode.

Lives of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Duryodhana and the like offer negative lessons. We find in the first book of Mahābhārata how Dhritarashtra confessed that he had the premonition of the doomsday.

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[44] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 7.3

[45] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 18.61-62

yadāśrauṣaṃ dhanurāyamya citraṃ viddhaṃ
lakṣyaṃ pātitaṃ vai pṛthivyām/
kṛṣṇāṃ hṛtāṃ paśyatāṃ sarvarājñāṃ tadā
nāśaṃse vijayāya sañjaya//[46]

In a series of verses, most of them beginning with yadāśrauṣaṃ and ending in tadā nāśaṃse vijayāya sañjaya he recollected the incidents and collapsed at the annihilation of the Kuru clan. He began with a claim that he is a man of wisdom-eye - Prajñācakṣu[47], but at the end tattered by the overbearing grief and repentance fell down unconscious. Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and Vidura all gave him wise counsel but he paid no heed to their words. He confessed of his inordinate, asinine affection to his son - muhyantaṃ cānumuhyāmi duryodhanamacetasam//[48] - 'I am deluded by my attachment to stupid Duryodhana who in turn is under the spell of delusion.'

Dhṛtarāṣṭra had heaps of qualms sulking, struggling beneath his conscience that never allowed him even a semblance of peace. For instance: When Vidura brought the good tidings of safety of the sons of Pāṇḍu and Kunti who had all escaped the lac house fire, Dhṛtarāṣṭra made a show of joy and jubilation in his presence. No sooner did Vidura leave the place there entered the obstinate Duryodhana with his ill-fated ally Karṇa. They came out in vociferous remonstrations to the delight expressed by the blind king. In reply to their protest the vile hearted, crafty old sire said shamelessly:

ahamapyevamevaitaccintayāmi yathā yuvam/
vivektuṃ nāhamicchāmi tvākāraṃ viduraṃ prati//
atasteṣāṃ guṇameva kīrtayāmi viśeṣataḥ/
nāvabudhyeta viduro mamābhiprāyami gitaiḥ//[49]

-'I also think the same way as you two do. In Vidura's presence, however, I speak especially of Pāṇḍavas' virtues only, lest I get exposed in my true colours and he should make out my intentions from the body language.'

Conscious acts of volition had led to such a wicked and wretched mindset. It is not that Dhṛtarāṣṭra lacked in education or scriptural learning. He had an excellent upbringing; Bhīṣma had given him all the best he could. The hunger for power, greed and asinine affection towards his headstrong, impulsive son destroyed both him and the multitude that followed him. Recklessly he snubbed the inner divine dictates, and that neglect cost him too dearly; the entire Kuru clan was effaced off the face of the earth.

This is the worst bane of human life - not being able to follow the dictates of one's own conscience. All men at some point of time or the other err in this regard. He is a blessed soul who can act in accordance with the guidance received from the inner divinity. Arjuna wanted to overcome this human weakness and confessed before Śrīkṛṣṇa:

atha kena prayukto'haṃ pāpaṃ carati pūruṣaḥ/
anicchannapi vārṣṇeya balādiva niyojitaḥ//[50]

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46 **Sukthankar, Vishnu** S., et al, The Mahābhārata, Vol-1, 1.1.102, (ādiparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 1933.

47 **Ibid.,** 1.1.101

48 **Ibid.,** 1.1.98

49 **Ibid.,** 1.193.1,2

50 **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 3.36

- 'Now, then, O Scion of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty (Kṛṣṇa), impelled by what does man commit sin even against his own wish, being compelled by force, as it were?

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

kāma eṣa krodha eṣa rajoguṇa samudbhavaḥ/
mahāśano mahāpāpmā viddhyenamiha vairiṇam//[51]

- 'It is lust, it is wrath, born of rajas (that makes man behave in spite of himself). This (ie. lust which is only an other form of wrath) is a great devourer, a great sinner. Know it to be the enemy in this life (ie. in this phenomenal existence).'

Duryodhana also confessed of this bane; as recorded in an oft-quoted verse:

janāmi dharmaṃ na ca me pravṛttirjānāmyadharmaṃ
na ca me nivṛttiḥ/
kenāpi devena hṛdi sthitena yathā niyukto'smi
tathā karomi//

- 'I know what is righteous but am not inclined to execute it. I know what is unrighteous but am unable to give it up. I act according to the entity situated in the heart that impells me to do its bidding.'

Arjuna sought refuse in wise counsel, subdued his lower self, followed the advice of the elders, and achieved the goal of his life. Duryodhana on the other hand did not seek advice, but succumbed to the call of the baser self. He was averse to corrections, incorrigible in his ways. He, often, mocked wise counsel, insulted elders, and turned out, eventually, a negative model lesson for the posterity.

This is an all time truth – those who act according to the inner divine voice never grieve, and the defaulters come to grief sooner or later. It is a great lesson in character building – to follow the dictates of one's own conscience.

Service to the wise

What is the need of service to the wise? Who are the wise? They who have reached the goal of life, have achieved the summum bonum of life are the wise. They have gone through the rigours of discipline and hard struggle in their formative years, and hence can help the youngsters build their personality. "Character has to be established through a thousand stumbles" said Swami Vivekananda.[52] The wise can help reduce the number of slips; having already traversed the path, and being acquainted with the way they can save you from many a pitfall. Sincere service rendered to them makes you dear to them and out of compassion they will teach what is good for you and what is not. Proper understanding of the good and the bad is what man greviously lacks in present times. Today, in this *Information Age* it is not at all difficult to get data; there is an overflow of information thanks to the technology. Browse on the net and in a wink of the eye you are flushed with information of all kinds. The urgency now, however, is the proper guidance, the right type of training of the mind and intellect, and the spiritual culture by which man can mould a blessed personality for himself. Devoid of spiritual wisdom all the wealth on earth cannot bring peace and bliss. This spiritual culture of the heart can be easily achieved by living with and serving the enlightened elders. The Lord, therefore, said:

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[51] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 3.37

[52] Vol. 8 p. 383 in a letter written to Goodwin from Switzerland on 8 Aug 1896

tadviddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā/
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṃ jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ//[53]

- 'Acquire knowledge through prostration, inquiry and service. The wise who have realized the Truth (pleased by your service) will impart the Knowledge to you.'

Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa said: "The world is the field of action. Through action one acquires knowledge. The guru instructs the disciple to perform certain works and refrain from others. Again, he advises the pupil to perform action without desiring the result. The impurity of the mind is destroyed through the performance of duty. It is like getting rid of a disease by means of medicine, under the instruction of a competent physician."[54]

Now, how and where to find spiritually enlightened men. Sincere seekers will find one soon. 'If you move one step towards God, God will come ten steps towards you' goes the famous adage. In case you are unable to find an enlightened teacher right now, you should take to scriptural study and keep holy company[55]. Sacred books and holy men will, in the interim, provide all the necessary strength and succour; for, they are the visible manifestations of God. It is said: 'Scriptures are living embodiments of verbal manifestations of the great viṣṇu - śabdamūrtidharasyaitad vapurviṣṇormahātmanaḥ//'[56] Śrīkṛṣṇa said: 'those who worship Me with devotion exist in Me and I too exist in them - ye bhajanti tu māṃ bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpyaham//'[57] Influence of holy men in character building can never be overestimated. Company of the holy men, is as good as keeping company with God Himself, if not more so. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, once, while explaining the importance of holy company said:

"The attainment of the Absolute is called the Knowledge of Brahman. But it is extremely difficult to acquire. A man cannot acquire the Knowledge of Brahman unless he completely rids himself of his attachment to the world. When the Divine Mother was born as the daughter of King Himalaya, She showed Her various forms to Her father. The king said, 'I want to see Brahman.' Thereupon the Divine Mother said: 'Father, if that is your desire, then you must seek the company of holy men. You must go into solitude, away from the world, and now and then live in holy company.'"[58]

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[53] **Śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** 4.34

[54] **The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,** Friday, March 9, 1883

[55] **Holy company** (sādhusaṅga or satsaṅga) means keeping in touch with holy men, taking their counsel and living up to that. And holy men are they who try to be pure and holy themselves and help others also who wish to be so.

[56] **Viṣṇupurāṇa** 1st part, 22nd chapter, 85th verse

[57] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** Chapter 9, Verse 29

[58] **The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,** Tuesday, October 16, 1883

Swami Vivekananda also repeatedly conveyed that it is by living with men of character alone a noble character can be formed.

Thus service to elders is given great emphasis in Mahābhārata. It is one of the traits of the educated and eminent men: "They indeed are the educated and eminent (śiṣṭa) who are well accomplished in the four vedas,[59] pure, possessed of exalted character, have their mind under control, intent upon serving elders, and have kept a tab on their senses. - traividyavṛddhāḥ śucayo vṛttavanto manasvinaḥ/ guruśuśrūṣavo dāntāḥ śiṣṭācārā bhavantyuta//[60]

Service to wise elders is a type of austerity. Gītā groups it under physical discipline: 'Worship of gods, twice-borns, the venerable, and the wise; practice of purity, uprightness, celibacy and non-injury are said to be the physical austerity - 'deva-dvija-guru-prājñapūjanam/ brahmacaryamahiṃsā ca śārīraṃ tapa ucyate//'[61] Who is venerable? Teachers, mentors, elders and all those who are superior in knowledge are venerable. The epic elsewhere says: 'Father, mother, sacrificial fire, one's own self, who initiates into spiritual life, and the teacher are the five venerable ones for anyone who seeks welfare.[62] - pañcaiva guravo brahman puruṣasya bubhūṣataḥ/ pitā mātāgnirātmā ca guruśca dvijasattama//.[63]

Why so much importance is attached to reverence to elders? It is because teacher-student tradition is the medium for the conveyance of wisdom. Books give information, wisdom comes from association with the wise. Service to elders by implication means due reverence to the tradition of knowledge. "Without an unbroken chain of discipleship--Guruparampara--nothing can be done" said Swami Vivekananda.[64] Scriptures say - 'It is by the study of the Vedas with auxiliaries from a teacher that one becomes well versed and not by merely studying a lot of books. - sāṅgānvedān guroryastu samadhīte dvijottamaḥ/ so'nūcānaḥ prabhavati nānyathā grantha-koṭibhiḥ//[65]' Mahābhārata explains it thus: 'Vedas speak diversely of the Ultimate truth, so are the codes of conduct, not two sages hold the same view in philosophy, the essence of *dharma* (righteousness) is hidden in the depths of the soul; so follow the path treaded by great personages (like Rāma) - vedā vibhinnāḥ smṛtayo vibhinnā nāsau muniryasya mataṃ na bhinnam/ dharmasya tattvaṃ nihitaṃ guhāyāṃ mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ//'[66] Thus it is the ways of the enlightened men that set the benchmark of right conduct.

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[59] This meaning is according to the Bhāratakaumudī gloss by Haridasa-siddhanta-vagisha Bhattacharya on Mahābhārata, Vol.10, p 1802 Vishwa Vani Prakashani, Kolkata, Bengali Year 1384 (ie. 1977)

[60] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S.**and **S.K.Belvalkar, editors.** The Mahābhārata, Vol-4. 3.198.74. (āraṇyakaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint)

[61] **Śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** Chapter 17, Verse 14

[62] **bubhūṣataḥ kalyāṇārthinaḥ.** The meaning given here is according to the Bhāratakaumudī gloss by Haridasasiddhanta-vagisha Bhattacharya on Mahābhārata, Vol.10, 3.180.27 p 1866, Vishwa Vani Prakashani, Kolkata, Bengali Year 1384 (ie.1977)

[63] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S.and S.K.Belvalkar,editors.** The Mahābhārata, Vol-4, 3.204.26. (āraṇyakaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint)

[64] **Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.** Vol 6, p. 252

[65] **Narada Purana,** First Part, Chapter 50, Verse 12

Humility and like come naturally when one learns to serve elders in the right spirit. Service to the wise makes a man obedient, polite, modest, courteous. All noble qualities embellish the personality of one who serves elders. Manu says: One who respects and serves elders gains longevity, piety, popularity and stability - abhivādanaśīlasya nityaṃ vṛddhopasevinaḥ/ catvāri tasya vardhante āyurdharmo yaśo balam//[67] It was by the counsel of the elders, seers and sages that Pāṇḍavas got over crises. Yudhishthira in the rājasūya episode humbly submits to the will of Śrī Kṛṣṇa saying: 'O Kṛṣṇa! well wishers say that I should perform the rājasūya. In that matter (as to whether we should undertake the sacrifice or not) my ultimate decision will be as per your advice - taṃ rājasūyaṃ suhṛdaḥ kāryamāhuḥ sametya me / tatra me niścitatamaṃ tava kṛṣṇa girā bhavet//'[68] And Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the best of men, never erred in humility and he began his answer thus: 'O scion of Bharat race! You are congnizant of things and I only say this' - jānatastveva te sarvaṃ kiñcidvakṣyāmi bhārata//[69] In the Gītā also we find the same tone; after giving an elaborate discourse on the right course of action, at the end Śrī Kṛṣṇa said in sweet politeness: 'Thus have I spoken to you of the most abstruse wisdom. Now consider all this comprehensively and do as you wish - vimṛśyaitadaśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru//'[70] This indeed is the blessed tradition of Indian masters: they never posit themselves as authority nor aggrandize themselves, but taught with humility. Even the seers of Upanishads referred back to their seniors: 'thus have we heard from the wise men who explained that to us - iti śuśruma dhīrīṇāṃ ye nastad vicacakṣire//[71]

Lack of proper reverential attitude is a bane of the modern mind. It is also one of the major causes of the multifarious problems faced in the society in general, and in educational institutions in particular. Jumping on the bandwagon of alien policies will not take you anywhere near the goal. Until this truth is brought home there cannot be any significant progress at home. Foreign formats cannot work in the Indian context and hence education in India, today, is at cross roads.

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[66] **Mahābhāratam, with Haridasa-siddhanta-vagisha** Bhattacharya's Bhāratakaumudī gloss in Sanskrit and translation into Bengali, Vanaparva, Vol 11, Chapter 267, Verse 84, p.2575, Vishwa Vani Prakashani, Kolkata, Bengali Year 1384 (1977 CE) (2 nd edition) (First edition 1340/1933 CE)

[67] **Manusmṛti,** 2.121

[68] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S.and S.K.Belvalkar,editors.** The Mahābhārata, Vol-2, 2.12.37, (sabhāarva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016 (Reprint)

[69] **Ibid.,** Vol-2, 2.13.1

[70] **śrīmadbhagavadgītā,** Chapter 18, Verse 29

[71] **īśāvāsyopaniṣat** 10

Concern for others

Self development is directly proportional to the well being of the community. Bereft of sympathy and empathy personality remains lopsided, incomplete. The more one works for the welfare of others the more good one brings to oneself. Swami Vivekananda said: "It is only by doing good to others that one attains to one's own good..."[72] Concern for the good of others is the best way to ensure one's own welfare. Seldom men realize this truth. Common men learn it by the pressure of circumstances, by blows, while professionals by practical wisdom adopt enlightened selfishness in managing things. When practised from a spiritual perspective, concern for others becomes the highest form of worship. This attitude is the result of spiritual culture of the heart gained under the mentorship of an enlightened master or by the blows of life. Generally, unless the soul has had first-hand experience of trials and tribulations, it is hard to apprehend the woes of the distressed. That is why men err in charity. Puffed up with transient treasures they tend to look down upon others. Affluence gives ample opportunity to practise sympathy but it does not teach the right spirit with which charity has to be practised. The rich ride the uptide of life and seldom take note of the afflicted who are at a low ebb. Scarcely do they realize the consequences of condescension. It is an immortal lesson that no man is always happy or miserable. "Joy or sorrow do not stay for long with anyone. Ups and downs come in life like the movement of the rim of a wheel - 'kasyātyantaṃ sukhamupanataṃ duḥkhamekāntato vā, nīcairgacchatyupari ca daśā cakranemikrameṇa'"[73] said Kālidāsa. "cakravat parivartante duḥkhāni ca sukhāni ca" - 'pain and pleasure come by turns like the rotation of a wheel' says Mahābhārata. Life carries man through the crests and throughs of joy and sorrow. Common man is buffetted by this; he is a prey to the nature. He is battered by the rise and fall of the tides of delight and distress. The wise, however, hold on to the inner spirit and stand on the strength of the soul; waves rush in and recede, but they remain unshakeable; they are not carried away by situations, favourable or otherwise. The wise adhere to principles and that gives them enormous strength of character. Patience in tribulations, and humility in prosperity is the secret of their strength. Mahābhārata presents Yudhiṣṭhira as a repository of such ideal qualities.

Yudhiṣṭhira always strove to bring comfort and joy to others. Whenever he had an upper hand over circumstances he sought always to alleviate the pain of the afflicted. Thoughts of self comfort and gain always took a back seat with him. Here is a lesson for all that aspire to possess an exalted character; you will do well to imbibe those traits in your personality. Yudhiṣṭhira's benevolence was repeatedly put to test and lo! each time he acquitted himself exceedingly well. He is a time tested icon. It is inspiring to read those accounts that depict the churning of emotions and sentiments, the testing of the human heart, and the final emergence of a sterling character.

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[72] **Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,** Vol. 6, p. 253 (In a letter written to his brother disciples from America in 1894)

[73] **Meghadūta** 2.49

In the sacrificial stick episode in the Dvaita forest, when Yudhiṣṭhira answered all the questions in the correct, Yakṣa was pleased and brought back to life all his brothers. He also disclosed on request his identity to Yudhiṣṭhira. He revealed himself as none other than his father, the Dharma and offered boons. Yudhiṣṭhira first prayed on behalf of the Brahmin rather than seeking something for himself. He sought for the very first boon the continuance of the fires of the Brahmin which got intercepted due to the deer's carrying away of the sticks. He said: araṇīsahitaṃ yasya mṛga ādāya gacchati/ tasyāgnayo na lupyeran prathamo'stu varo mama//[74] Thus his prime concern was relief for the afflicted and not any selfish end. Pleased by his magnanimity Yakṣa offered a second boon. Yudhiṣṭhira's second choice speaks of his commonsense and sincerity of purpose. He sought for the safety and success of his kinsmen. He prayed for complete secrecy of the identity of Pāṇḍavas during the thirteenth year in forest which was to be the life incognito as per the terms of the game of dice. Pleased, once again, by his concern for others Yakṣa offered a third boon. Yudhiṣṭhira, invariably fared exceedingly well. Mundane benefits and selfish gain never defiled his soul. He prayed:

devadevo mayā dṛṣo bhavānsākṣātsanātanaḥ/
yaṃ dadāsi varaṃ tuṣṭastaṃ grahīṣyāmyahaṃ pitaḥ//
jayeyaṃ lobhamohau ca krodhaṃ cāhaṃ sadā vibho/
dāne tapasi satye ca mano me satataṃ bhavet//[75]

- O God of gods, I have seen you the eternal being and what else can be a greater gain to me. Yet, I accept the boon you give out of joy, father! May I always subdue greed, infatuation and anger, O Great one! May my mind always be imbued with philanthropy, austerity and truth!

Lapping up of desired object is not sin, but it is mean and childish. A noble, mature mind allows joy to sink down in its natural course, without losing poise.

Immortal Lessons from 'The Great Ascent' episode

Educational institutions conduct end semester exams. Soul also takes an exam at the end of its journey on earth; an assessment of the life of a being is made towards the end. This whole universe is an university, and exams are conducted towards the end of life. As students study diligently for exams strict observance of codes of conduct is necessary to excell in the life's exam. Perpetual effort at self improvement is the preparation to be made to fare well in the life' test. On the eve of death events of life and deeds performed come before the mind's eye. Conscience of the man makes the assessment of his life and issues the grade sheet. Every thought, word and deed will be evaluated. At this stage of life the only companion to the soul is the character. Sages and scriptures have, hence, repeatedly advised men to be vigilant of one's thought word and deed. Conscienteous efforts made in reforming oneself and the struggle undergone in self-edification never goes in vain. Inadvertence, on the other hand, will mercilessly take its toll. The penultimate book in Mahābhārata gives an episode ('The Great Ascent Episode' - Mahāprasthānaparva') where the character of each of the five Pāṇḍava's and Draupadī is assessed and evaluated. In their ascent to heaven one after the other they fell down being disqualified on some score in reaching heaven as it is (in the mortal frame). Bhīma asks the reason for the fall of each of the dear ones and Yudhiṣṭhira answers them with his inimitable poise. The conversation is highly enlightening and reveals the subtleties of right conduct, and the secret of immaculate perfect character. Selected verses in transliterated form with a free translation is provided below for the delight of reading. First came the turn of Draupadī and Bhīma asked:

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[74] **Sukthankar, Vishnu S. and S.K. Belvalkar, editors.** The Mahābhārata, Vol-4, 3.298.12, (Araṇyaparva), Bhandarkar Oritental Research Institute, Poona, 2016(Reprint)

[75] **Ibid.**, Vol.4, 3.298.22,23 (Araṇyaparva)

nādharmaścaritaḥ kaścid rājaputryā parantapa |
kāraṇaṃ kiṃ nu tadrājan yat kṛṣṇā patitā bhuvi ||[76]

- O scorcherer of foes! The princess (Draupadī) has never committed any blunder and what is the reason that she fell down on earth. Yudhiṣṭhira said:

pakṣapāto mahānasyā viśeṣeṇa dhanañjaye |
tasyaitat phalamadyaiṣā bhunkte puruṣasattama ||[77]

- O best of men! She was more partial to Arjuna in particular and now she reaps the fruit of that. (It was her bounden duty to be equal to all the five brothers as she was ceremonially wedded to each of them and this lapse on her part disqualified her from bodily ascending the heaven) Bhīma asked:

yo'yamasmāsu sarveṣu śuśrūṣuranahaṅkṛtaḥ|
so'yaṃ mādravatīputraḥ kasmān nipatito bhuvi|| [78]

- Why did the son of Mādrī (Sahadeva) fell down who has always been non-egoistic and willing to readily serve us all. Yudhiṣṭhira answered:

ātmanaḥ sadṛśaṃ prājñaṃ naiṣo'manyata kañcana |
tena doṣeṇa patitastasmādeṣa nṛpātmajaḥ || [79]

- He never considered anyone as equal to him in prudence and due to that fallacy he fell down. (He erred in modesty and that was his demerit). Bhīma asked:

yo'yamakṣatadharmātmā bhrātā vacanakārakaḥ |
rūpeṇāpratimo loke nakulaḥ patito bhuvi ||[80]

- Alas! Brother Nakula fell down who is impeccably righteous, keeps his words, and is incomparably handsome in the world. Yudhiṣṭhira answered:

rūpeṇa matsamo nāsti kaścidityasya darśanam |
adhikaścāhamevaika ityasya manasi sthitam ||

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[76] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.5 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[77] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.6 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[78] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.9 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[79] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.10 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[80] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.14 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

nakulaḥ patitastasmādāgaccha tvaṃ vṛkodara |
yasya yadvihitaṃ vīra so'vaśyaṃ tadupāśnute ||[81]

- O Vṛkodara(Bhīma)! he was of the opinion that there was none equal to him nor greater than him in good looks and that is why Nakula fell down. O heroic warrier! One surely gets what one deserves. (Arrogance has no place in ethics and whoever falls prey to it pays dearly). Bhīma asked:

anṛtaṃ na smarāmyasya svaireṣvapi mahātmanaḥ |
atha kasya vikāro'yaṃ yenāyaṃ patito bhuvi || [82]

- I do not remember him (Arjuan) having lied even in sport and by what defect has he fell down. Yudhiṣṭhira answered:

ekāhnā nirdaheyaṃ vai śatrūnityarjuno'bravīt |
na ca tatkṛtavāneṣa śūramānī tato'patat ||
avamene dhanurgrāhāneṣa sarvāṃśca phalgunaḥ |
yathā coktaṃ tathā caiva kartavyaṃ bhūtimicchatā ||[83]

- Arjuna, vaunted himself valiant, and declared that he will terminate the foes in one day but did not keep his word. And therefore, this Phalgunaḥ (Arjuan) fell down who looked down on all the bow-bearers (warriors who fought with bow and arrow). One who aspires for prosperity must keep his words. (One should bear out in action what one claims; failure to do so is a great discredit even in the secular world and what to speak of in matters sublime). Bhīma asked:

bho bho rājannavekṣasva patito'haṃ priyastava |
kinnimittaṃ ca patanaṃ brūhi me yadi vettha ha || [84]

- O king! Behold me; I, your dear brother, am falling. Please tell me, if you know, the cause of my fall. Yudhiṣṭhira answered:

atibhuktaṃ ca bhavatā prāṇena ca vikatthase |
anavekṣya paraṃ pārtha tenāsi patitaḥ kṣitau ||[85]

- Without a thought for others you ate more and bragged of your strength, and it is due to that now you fell down. (One of the first lessons in morality is to further others cause by restraing oneself and Bhīma had blundered in this respect)

Thus Yudhiṣṭhira alone moved on with the dog who had been following them since the very beginning of the ascent. The rest of the story has been told earlier under *Definition* 1 (*śīlam*). Finally Yudhiṣṭhira alone qualified for the bodily ascent to heaven. This entire episode is a great lesson in personality development, in character building. The more one ponders on this narrative the more he learns in morality and ethics.

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[81] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.16-17 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[82] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.20 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[83] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.21-22 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[84] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.24 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

[85] **Ibid.,** Vol.19, 17.2.25 (Mahāprasthānaparva)

Conclusion

Character should be given prime importance in human life. Man of character fares well everywhere; in all things in all times and in all places. A famous proverb in Sanskrit says: 'Learning is the wealth in foreign lands, discretion is the wealth in vices, merit born of noble conduct is the wealth in the other world, but character is a treasure in every way - videśeṣu dhanaṃ vidyā vyasaneṣu dhanaṃ matiḥ/ paraloke dhanaṃ dharmaḥ śīlaṃ tu nikhilaṃ dhanam//[86] The well known English epigram puts it thus: "When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost."[87] This implies that one should safeguard one's character even at the cost of wealth and not vice versa which is what is often witnessed in the society. That is why wise men like Vidura advised: Take care of your conduct, wealth comes and goes. One who loses riches loses nothing, but he who lacks character is lost for ever - vṛttaṃ yatnena saṃrakṣed vittameti ca yāti ca/ akṣīṇo vittataḥ kṣīṇo vṛttatastu hato hataḥ// Hence Swami Vivekananda wrote in one of his letters: Neither money pays, nor name, nor fame, nor learning; it is character that can cleave through adamantine walls of difficulties. Bear this in mind.[88]

❑

GAMAKA VACHANA : RAJASUYA YAGA IN SABHAPARVA

Vachana : Smt. Shobha Shashidhar
Vyakhyana : Smt. Vijaya Ranganath

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[86] **Kṣemendra's Bhāratamañjarī,** 13.470

[87] **https:**//www.brainyquote.com/quotes/billy_graham_161989 3.

[88] **Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol 7,** p.488, in a letter to Swami Brahmananda written in 1894

philosophical doctrines in mahabharata

— *Vidwadvibhushana*

Pt. Madhusudana Shastry Hampiholi

Mahabharata, is a rich treasure-house of thoughts pertaining to religion, secularism, morality and philosophy. Different branches of thought, current in the contemporary society, like Charvaka, Sougata, Sankhya, Yoga, have been incidentally dealt with. The Mahabharata has made references to all of them, and has critically examined them in their own rights and has finally refuted them.

Mahabharata is a historic text which portrays our ancient dharma and culture, human values, life-styles, ancient social order and dynamics, and political life. Though it has been respected as a sacred epic, in Bharatiya literary tradition, it has been called *itihasa* meaning history.

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणामुपदेशसमन्वितं |
पूर्ववृत्तकथायुक्तमितिहासं प्रचक्षते ||

History is that class of writing which is prescriptive of the four *purusharthas* or ultimate aims of life, namely, *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha,* and yet is faithful in its narrating events which have happened. This description applies aptly to *Mahabharata*, because it is a precise account of the era of the emperors of 'Chandra dynasty' and also advocates the *purusharthas* like *dharma* and *artha.* As it informs readers about the paths of *karma-bhakti-jnana* which are concepts propounded in the Vedas, it is also known as the *panchama* or the fifth veda. It may not be an exaggeration to describe the epic *Mahabharata* as an encyclopaedia dealing truthfully with ancient dharma, philosophy, ways of life, statesmanship, economics, geography, cosmology and mundane business. *Mahabharata* describes itself thus :

धर्मेचार्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ |
यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्क्वचित् ||
(Adi Parva : 62-53)

Meaning:- Whatever is expounded here in the matters of *dharma, artha, kama and moksha,* exists elsewhere too. Whatever is not here, is not anywhere else. The author of *Mahabharata*, Sri Vedavyasa Maharshi proudly calls his work as a canonical (samhita) text on dharma :

The following quotes assert that *Mahabharata* deals with both religious discipline [*dharma shastra*] as well as final deliverance *[moksha].*

मोक्षशास्त्रमिदं प्रोक्तं व्यासेनामितबुद्धिना |
मोक्षधर्माश्च कथिताः विचित्रा बहुविस्तराः |

Further, many concepts relating to salvation, *moksha shastra,* are dealt with here in great detail. There is a whole canto in the *Shanti Parva* of *Mahabharata* called *Mokshadharma parva*. Bharatiya philosophy has been described there at length.

Here, in this article, an attempt is made to present a brief outline of the philosophical doctrines contained in the *Mahabharata*. The word *tattva* meaning philosophical doctrine has two known dimensions.

The dictum **तत्त्वम् ब्रह्मणि याथार्थ्ये** implies that *tattva* means B*rahma*, or True Knowledge; it also means **यथार्थज्ञान** [right knowledge] ie Philosophical study (**तत्त्वशास्त्र**) or philosophical wisdom (**तत्त्वज्ञान**). It may be understood as a system comprising descriptions of Brahman or *paramatma*, the universal soul, *jivatma* the individual soul, *jagat* the Universe, and the process of its creation, and its nature, and its mutual interactions, and so on. It would appear that the main purport of *Mahabharata* is metaphysical in nature, according to the *anukramanika parva* of the *Adi Parva.*

शाश्वतं ब्रह्म परमं ध्रुवं ज्योतिः सनातनम् |
यस्य दिव्यानि कर्माणि कथयन्ति मनीषिणः||
असच्च सदसच्चैव यस्मात् विश्वं प्रवर्तते |
सन्ततिश्च प्रवृत्तिश्च जन्ममृत्युपुनर्भवाः ||
(Adi Parva : 1-257,258)

The Supreme Soul, *Parabrahma* is eternal, perpetual, indestructible and is the manifestation of the highest effulgence. It is both imbued with qualities and free from all such attributes. (**सगुण** and **निर्गुण**). *Mahabharata* is rich with the descriptions of *saguna* Brahma. *Parabrahma* is *The Cause,* behind both the expounded and unexpounded aspects of the living and inert (moving and the non-moving) manifestations of the world. It is owing to Him that all reproductive life-forms are created, duty and performance are witnessed, and births, deaths and rebirths happen. This is how *Parabrahma* is perceived and described.

अध्यात्मं श्रूयते यच्च पञ्चभूतगुणात्मकं |
अव्यक्तादि परं यच्च स एव परिगीयते ||
(Adi Parva : 1-259)

The characteristics of *jivatma* are given here. The five primordial elements proceeding from *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, and their common source viz the principle of the unmanifest, and the original origin of this unmanifest, viz *Parabrahma paramatma* are all described here, in this book.

यत्तद्यतिवरा मुक्ता ध्यानयोगबलान्विता: |
प्रतिबिम्बमिवादर्शे पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ||
(Adi Parva : 1-266)

Ascetics, who, equipped with powers of meditation and have attained salvation even while alive, experience the Divine in the bosom of their hearts as an individual beholds his image in a mirror. Salvation is expounded here as the experience of identity of the individual soul with Brahman (**ब्रह्मात्मैक्यानुभूति**) It is evident that philosophy is the main theme inherent in *Mahabharata*.

Upanishads, which form the latter part of the Vedic literature, review and discuss several philosophical doctrines. As an heir-successor of this ancient lineage, it might be said that *Mahabharata* is the best teacher of philosophy. The well-known compendium of doctrinal discourse, Bhagavad Gita, forms a part of the *Bheeshma Parva* of the *Mahabharata*. This spiritual aspect of this epic is revered by Western philosophers too.

Likewise, in the *Sanatsujateeya* which forms a part of *Udyoga Parva* too, we get insights into Indian philosophical thought. Many short and long discourses between *Janamejaya-Vaishampayana, Bheeshma-Yudhishtira, Manu-Brihaspati, Brahma-Rudra, Janaka-Yaajnavalkya, Janakajanadeva-Panchashikha, Narada-Asitadevala, Shwetaketu-Suvarchala,* and many more, are full of Metaphysical-dialogues, mystic and esoteric exchanges. Moreover, many more texts bearing the name Gita, such as the *Hamsagita* and *Parashara Gita* have *enriched* the *Mahabharata,* with the treasures of *Vedantic* thoughts.

Mahabharata also has patronised many other schools of philosophical thought called *darshanas*. It has reviewed the atheistic *Charvaka* and Buddhist *darshanas.* One can also see a mention of a character named *Charvaka,* who is considered to be an exponent of the atheistic school.

A Critique of the Charvaka School.

Many people are sceptic about the existence of a supra-corporeal soul. **येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्ये अस्तीत्यैके नायमस्तीति चैके** .... (Katha Upanishad 1-1-20) Agnostics do doubt the presence of a trans-physiological *atman* since the days of the Upanishads. Divergent views are expressed regarding the soul. Some say that there is a spirit beyond the senses, mind and intelligence, and the others say that there is nothing called 'a soul' beyond the body. These mutually opposite opinions coexist from times immemorial.

The Charvaka school does not concede the presence of the Soul, beyond physical dimensions. This is because its followers acknowledge only what is tangible. Even the cardinal element called space, (आकाश) which is invisible, is refuted by them. They admit the existence of only four cardinal elements viz Earth *[prithvi], Water [jala], Fire [tejas]* and Air *[vayu].*

The followers of *Charvaka* advocate that 'The *atman'* is constituted with these four cardinal elements. Shedding of the corporeal frame is *moksha*. They do not admit *shruti* (vedic-statements) as a valid proof. The *Janaka-Agnishikha* discourse in the *Mahabharata*, while rejecting the use of inference as proof to establish the existence of a bodiless soul, paraphrases the argument thus :

> **यत्रयत्रानुमानेऽस्मिन् कृतं भावयतोऽपि च |**
> **नान्यो जीवः शरीरस्य नास्तिकानां मते स्थितः ||**
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 218-28)

Proponents of Charvaka school putforth several wise arguments to refute the existence of a soul which is distinct from the body.

> **रेतो वटकणिकायां घृतपाकाधिवासनम् |**
> **जातिः स्मृतिरयस्कान्तः सूर्यकान्तोऽम्बुभक्षणम् ||**
> || (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 218-29)

Just as the miniscule seed has the latent potency to engender a sprawling Banyan tree, just as the hay eaten by the cow has the potency that manifests itself in milk and ghee, just as some herbs and their distillations contain intoxicating power, so does the life-spirit begin with the coming together of the semen-virile and the ovum in the body.

The Charvakas further contend that the sentient soul is not different from the body. This can be proved from the illustrations of **जाति, स्मृति, अयस्कान्त, सूर्यकान्तमणि,** and **वडवानल.** Here in this context, *jaati* means birth. Jaggery, grapes and other ingredients are kept in a vessel for fermentation, and an intoxicating syrup is produced. So also, the synthesis of the cardinal elements viz Earth, Water, Fire and Air produce the living being.

As the inactive mind might give rise to self awareness (**स्मृति**), life will find expression in the corporeal frame. Just as the inert magnet (**अयस्कान्त**) draws iron particles towards it, so also, the gross body activates and controls the senses. The Sun-crystal (**सूर्यकान्तमणि**), though cold, can cause electrical fire which it synergises from sunlight. Semen, though cold, in its synthesis with body juices and blood will kindle the fire in the belly. And the submarine fire (**वडवानल**) might consume water itself, the body born from seed will bear, nourish and prepare a seed. Therefore, it cannot be agreed that there is a discrete presence of something other than the body.

Such atheistic arguments of Charvaka are ably dispelled in the *Mahabharata*. Let us listen to it in Agnishikha's words:

> **प्रेतीभूतेऽत्ययश्चैव देवताद्युपयाचनम् ।**
> **मृते कर्मनिवृत्तिश्च प्रमाणमिति निश्चयः ।।**
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 218-30)

The proof of a supra-corporeal spirit is derived from the 'life spirit' not being present in a dead body. Had the life spirit been so much a part of the body, it must be exhibited by the body even after death, for, the body exists for some time even after death. But it lacks any energy, and is immobile.

Therefore, there is an entity distinct from the body. This establishes that there is a soul different from the body.

The atheists themselves worship gods with chanting (**मन्त्र**), recitation of holy names (**जप**), rituals (**अनुष्ठान**) or *tantra* (**तन्त्र**) to get rid of their physical and / or worldly suffering. If the worshipped divinity is a synthesis of the five elements (**पान्चभौतिक**), then it must present itself perceptibly like a pot. If its presence is supra elemental, it stands proved that there is a certain discreteness to its spiritual existence. The argument of the atheists that the life-spirit (**चैतन्य**) is a result of the fusion of cosmic elements, and the examples given in support of his arguments, are all inadmissible and hence futile.

This is so because all the illustrations advanced above, show the constitution of tangible forms from tangible material. The metaphysical entity cannot be created from the physical entity. 'Life Energy' or 'The Life-Spirit' can never spring from the physical body. Hence, it is an undeniable conclusion that The Life-Spirit is distinct from the body. This same Life Spirit is called The Soul, The A*tman*. Thus, the advocacy of 'One-ness of the Body-Spirit' of Charvaka is refuted.

A Critique of Kshanika Vijnanavada

(क्षणिक विज्ञानवाद)

The *kshanika vijnana vaada (*The argument that everything is momentary, or relative, or conditional or dependent) of the *Sougatas* (Buddhists) is systematically repudiated by *Mahabharata*.

यदा स्वरूपतश्चान्यो जातितः शुभतोऽर्थतः।
कथमस्मिन् स इत्येवं सर्वं वा स्यादसंहितम् ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 218-35)

In the doctrine of *kshanika vada,* both the body and the soul are momentary. They keep changing every moment. A person who exists in this moment will not be the same in the next moment. He keeps on changing continuously. In this doctrine of impermanence, the body, appearance, birth [birth because in this doctrine each individual is born anew every moment], nature of an individual, and the preference of his advantages keep changing every moment.

The argument of the *kshanika vijnanavadis* contradicts all logic and proof. There cannot be a recognition of even oneself after the passage of the moment. All pleasures or even the salvation shall occur, not by design but by accident.

If this doctrine is accepted, the desire for liberation is conceived by one, the effort to achieve it executed by another, and ultimately the salvation is gained by yet another. If this be the state of affairs, none would be eager to pursue either *dharma* or *karma*.

एवं सति च का प्रीतिर्दानविद्यातपोबलैः ।
यदस्याचरितं कर्म सर्वमन्यत् प्रपद्यते ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 218-36)

If one were to concede *kshanika vijnanavada*, none would develop interest in deeds of charity, in pursuing religious studies, in the performance of austerities and in gaining the spiritual strength and forte. It is simply because, the person who pursues all these activities, will never secure the fruits of his sweat and labour, because he would have disappeared by the time his actions fructify. Some one performs the meritorious deeds or commit sinful actions, but some one else gains pleasures or undergoes suffering for the actions not done by him. It is highly absurd and ridiculous. Thus, if we accept *Kshanika Vijnanavada,* all our spiritual (**वैदिक अनुष्ठानम्**) and mundane (**व्यवहार**) transactions would go in vain. Therefore, Kshanika-Vijnanavada is not acceptable. Thus, The Mahabharata rejects the tenets of Kshanika Vijnanavada.

Review of Sankhya and Yoga Doctrines

Sankhya and Yoga schools have been discussed in various contexts in the *Mahabharata*. An in-depth study of Mahabharata discloses that the total number of principles as envisaged in the Sankhya philosophy, is not the same from Parva to Parva of Mahabharata. There is a wide variance and a gradual increase in this number. It leads us to deduce, that the thinkers of this school went on improving upon their system.

We may see the following examples in support of this statement.

We come across very many eulogies of Lord *Parameshvara,* in different ways, in *Bheeshmastavaraja,* in *Shanti Parva of The Mahabharata.* While praying The Lord's Sankhya form [i.e. extolling Him according to the Sankhya School], The Mahabharata praises Him as constituted with seventeen attributes (**सप्तदशतत्त्व स्वरूप**).

> **यं त्रिधात्मानमात्मस्थं वृत्तं षोडशभिर्गुणैः।**
> **प्राहुः सप्तदशं सांख्यास्तस्मै सांख्यात्मने नमः ॥**
> (Shanti Parva-Bheeshmastavaraja : 16)

According to commentators, the five action-organs, five knowledge-organs, five elements and the mind brings the total to sixteen principles. The seventeenth is the divine *paramatma tattva.* The Sankhya school was earlier content with these seventeen principles.

But, the *Shanti Parva of Mahabharata* adds, eight more principles viz *prakruti, mahat tattva, ahamkara, and five tanmaatras.* So totally 16+8 makes the number 24. This set of twenty four finds a mention even in the *dharmavyadha* episode of *Vanaparva.*

The *Shanti Parva* account of *Sankhya* principles is as under.

> **अव्यक्तमाहुः प्रकृतिं परां प्रकृतिवादिनः।**
> **तस्मान्महत् समुत्पन्नं द्वितीयं राजसत्तम॥**
> **अहंकारस्तु महतः तृतीयमिति नः श्रुतम्।**
> **पञ्चभूतान्यहंकारादाहुः संख्यात्मदर्शिनः॥**
> **एता प्रकृतयश्चाष्टौ विकाराश्चापि षोडश।**
> **पञ्च चैव विशेषा वै तथा पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि च॥**

Prakritivadins, maintain that the primordial substance, which is unmanifest, is known as *Moola-Prakriti.* From this was born the *Mahat*-principle. From this *Ahamkara* springs. From this *Ahamkara*, five subtle elements, viz potential senses of sound, touch, form, taste and smell ensue. The principles of *Mahat* etc fall under *Prakriti and Vikriti* categories as well. Five elements (**सूक्ष्म महाभूत**), five action-organs (**पञ्चकर्मेन्द्रिय**) and five sense-organs (**पञ्चज्ञानेन्द्रिये** issue forth from five *Tanmatras.*

वाक् = speech organs, **पाणि** = hand, **पाद** = feet, **पायु** = organ of excretion, **उपस्थ** = organ of reproduction are the five organs of action. (**पञ्चकर्मेन्द्रिय**). **श्रवणेन्द्रिय** = organ of hearing [ear], **त्वगिन्द्रिय**= organ of touch [skin], **चक्षुरिन्द्रिय** = organ of seeing [eye], **रसनेन्द्रिय** = organ of taste [tongue], and **घ्राणेन्द्रिय** = organ of smell [nose], are the five sensory organs

(पञ्चज्ञानेन्द्रिय). Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth are the five gross elements (पञ्चमहाभूत). All these total up to sixteen modifications. (विकार). The primordial nature, and the seven potentialities (प्रकृति विकृति), together with the reconstituted sixteen principles total up to twenty four principles which are in line with *Sankhya* thinking, is how *Maharshi Vasishtha* explains to *Karaalajanaka. Sankhya* scholars concede a discrete spirit, or *purusha* beyond these twenty four principles.

तत्त्वानि च चतुर्विंशत् परिसङ्ख्याय तत्त्वत:|
सांख्या: सह प्रकृत्यातु निस्तत्त्व: पञ्चविंशक:||
(Shanti Parva : 306-43)

The Sankhyas consider the twenty four principles beginning with *prakriti* and regard the non-inert, namely the spirit *purusha* as the twenty-fifth.

पञ्चविंशोऽप्रकृत्यात्मा बुध्यमान इति स्मृत: |
यदा तु बुध्यतेऽऽत्मानं तदा भवति केवल: ||
(Shanti Parva : 306-44)

He, who understands that he is distinct from the principles, is eternal, and immutable, will attain '*Kevala*'hood. केवल means, well settled in his *Real-Nature*. This, according to Sankhya is to attain salvation - कैवल्य.

Yoga, which is proximal to Sankhya, is described in the beginning of the 300th chapter of the *Shanti Parva* of *Mahabharata*. But, this chapter categorically mentions how Yoga doctrines differ from Sankhya doctrines. The twenty four Sankhya principles are also accepted by *Yogadarshana. But, Yogadarshana,* unlike *Sankhya, accepts The* Supreme Being (ईश्वर).

अनीश्वर: कथं मुच्येदित्येवं शत्रुकर्शन|
वदन्ति कारणै: श्रैष्ठ्यं योगा: सम्यङ्मनीषीण:||
(Shanti Parva : 300-3)

Without the grace of The Supreme Being, how can one attain liberation ? Scholars, who are well versed in Yoga, advance this reason to accept The Supreme Being (ईश्वर).

Chapter number 306 of Shantiparva of Mahabharata is entirely dedicated to the discussion of Yoga-Darshana.

योगकृत्यं तु योगानां ध्यानमेव परं बलम् ।
तच्चापि द्विविधं ध्यानमाहुर्विद्याविदो जना:॥
एकाग्रता च मनस: प्राणायामस्तथैव च ।
प्राणायामस्तु सगुणो निर्गुणो मानसस्तथा॥
(Shanti Parva : 306-7,9)

Meditation (ध्यान) is emphasized and holds the prime position in The Yogadarshana. According to *Mahabharata*, meditation is of two types. [1] Concentration of mind and [2] Pranayama viz systematised control of breathing. Pranayama, in turn, is also twofold, Saguna and Nirguna. If the mind relates to any Form, it is *saguna pranayama.* If it relates to the *formless,* it is *nirguna pranayama.* The prime objective of *Yogadarshana* is to take the mind to the highest state of stillness i.e. *samadhi,* by tempering the senses through *dhyana* and *pranayama.* Given below is its description in *Mahabharata*.

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यो निवर्त्य मनसा शुचि:।
दशद्वादशभिर्वापि चतुर्विंशात् परं तत:॥
सञ्चोदनादिभिर्मतिमानात्मानं चोदयेदथ।
तिष्ठंतमजरं तं तु यत्तदुक्तं मनीषिभि:॥
(Shanti Parva : 306-10,11)

The intelligent *yogi* must exercise his unblemished mind to deflect his senses from their objects. (विषय) and turn them inward. This is known as *pratyahara* in *Yoga.* Thus, using *pranayama, pratyahara, dhyana* and other devices, he must invest his being (पुरुष) in the Supreme Being who is beyond *Prakriti* comprising twenty four principles. This will take him to *kaivalya,* that is, salvation. *Mahabharata* contains many such descriptions of *Yogadarshana.*

यदा स केवलीभूतः षड्विंशमनुपश्यति ।
तदा स सर्वविद् विद्वान् न पुनर्जन्म विन्दति ॥
(Shanti Parva : 318-80)

When the individual *purusha* who is distinct from the twenty four principles perceives the twenty sixth principle which is *Isvara*, is relieved from rebirth, in other words, attains *Moksha*. This is the philosophy of *Yogadarshana*. Both Sankhya and Yoga darshanas have been discussed at length in various contexts in the *Mahabharata*, and have been approved by the wise and the noble.

उभे चैते मते ज्ञाते नृपते शिष्टसम्मते|
अनुष्ठिते यथाशास्त्रं नयेतां परमां गतिम्||
(Shanti Parva : 303-8)

Mahabharata teaches that when both *Sankhya* and *Yoga* are studied methodically, and their doctrines are practised meticulously, the aspirant will attain the highest status. In this manner, the tenets of different philosophical systems have been discussed in detail, in various anecdotes in The *Mahabharata*.

Both *Sankhya* and *Yoga* accept multi-souls. But, *Mahabharata* categorically refutes this multi-Soul theory. We come across many branches of philosophy, and their processes. But it is The *Vedantadarshana* that is agreeable to *Mahabharata.* A comprehensive and comparative study of *Mahabharata* reveals this fact.

Vedanta Darshana as propounded in The Mahabharata

Vedantadarshana has its origin and expression in the Upanishads which form the concluding parts of the Vedic literature. Badarayana authored the Brahma Sutras which are like the thread which strings the blossoms known as *Vedantic* averments. The Bhagavad Gita forms part of *Mahabharata* and is considered as authentic as the Upanishads. It is evident from the colophons of each chapter of the said Book, which conclude with the line

भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ।

Therefore it is doubtless that *Mahabharata* is completely in agreement with *Vedantadarshana,* or the philosophy of the Upanishads.

The Vedanta school of thought is characterised by reflections on *Parabrahma, jiva, jagat* and their interrelationships. It is only *Parabrahma* that is the ultimate truth. Essentially the universe is not real, but is only empirical. The *Vedantadarshana* propounds that the individual Soul / *jiva* is nothing but the *Parabrahman.* This is very clearly advocated in the *Mahabharata.*

Brahman [The Supreme Reality]

बहवः पुरुषा लोके सांख्ययोगविचारणे |
नैतदिच्छन्ति पुरुषमेकं कुरुकुलोद्भव ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 350-2)

Both *Sankhya* and *Yogadarshanas* enunciate the plurality of *Purushas.* But this is not correct. There can be only one *purusha,*as stated in the *Mahabharata.*

समासतस्तु यद्व्यास: पुरुषैकत्वमुक्तवान्
तत् तेऽहं संप्रवक्ष्यामि प्रसादादमितौजस:
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 350-7)

Maharshi Vyasa explains only one *purusha.*

सदेव सौम्य इदमग्र आसीत्, एकमेवाद्वितीयम् Chandogya and other Upanishads explain that Brahman is unique and without a second. Accordingly, Brahman is without attributes (nirguna), immutable, a fusion of existence, consciousness and bliss (sacchidananda). This is endorsed by **सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म** (Taittireeya) and **साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च** (Shwetashwatara). Mahabharata reiterates the same in **पुरुषश्चैको निर्गुणो विश्वरूप:** Brahman is without a second, without attributes and is all-pervading. (Shanti Parva - Moksha Dharma 351-10)

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षु:श्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् ।
नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यंति धीरा: ॥
(Mundaka : 1-1-6)

This is how *Mundakopanishat* describes the Supreme Being i.e. *Brahman.* This *Brahman* is imperceptible, and incomprehensible. It is imperishable. It cannot be categorised under any caste and creed or tribe (*varna-gotra rahita*). It does not possess any organs; it is eternal, omnipresent and subtle.

The same idea is promulgated in The Mahabharata as follows :-

श्रुणु पुत्र यथा ह्येष पुरुष: शाश्वतोऽव्यय: ।
अक्षयश्चाप्रमेयश्च सर्वगश्च निरुच्यते ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 351-1)

The Manu-Brihaspati debate beautifully brings out the point that *Brahman* is without attribute and is immutable.

रसैर्विमुक्तं विविधैश्च गंधैरशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपवच्च ।
अग्राह्यमव्यक्तमवर्णमेकं पञ्चप्रकारान् ससृजे प्रजानाम् ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 201-26)

Brahman is free from qualities like form, taste, smell, touch or sound. It is beyond the reach of mind and senses. It is unmanifest and one without a second. Really speaking, all the sensory organs and their objects evolve from this Brahman. It has no gender. It is neither divisible nor indivisible.

न स्त्री पुमान्नापि नपुंसकं च न सन्न चासत्सदसच्च तन्न ।
पश्यन्ति यद् ब्रह्मविदो मनुष्यास्तदक्षरं न क्षरतीति विद्धि ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 201-27)

The *Brahman* is neither female, nor male nor neuter. It is neither manifest nor unmanifest. It is eternal and Pure. This Principle can be experienced only by the wise who have realised The Brahman. This is how the *Shwetashwatara Upanishad enunciates The Brahman.*

नैव स्त्री न पुमानेष न चैवायं नपुंसक: ।
यद्यच्छरीरमादत्ते तेन तेन च रक्ष्यते ॥
(Shwetashwatara : 5-10)

Similarly, the *Bhishmastavaraja* of The Mahabharata describes The *Brahman* or *Paramatman* as having all forms; as being the substratum of everything, and as being the ground or base of all action.

यस्मिन् सर्वं यत: सर्वं य: सर्वं सर्वतश्च य: ।
यश्च सर्वमयो नित्यं तस्मै सर्वात्मने नम: ॥
(Shanti Parva-Bheeshmastavaraja : 83)

Brahman is omnipresent, residing within everything, is the force behind the subject, object and the instrument of action, i.e. He is omnipotent (**कर्तृ-कर्म-करण**). The following statements of the Upanishads testify this fact.

He is the Primal Cause; and is beginningless. **यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते** (Taittireeya). The Vedas are the outcome of his breath. (**यस्य निश्वसितं**). and similar Upanishadic utterances assert this fact.

Nature of The Individual Soul-Jivatma

The individual Soul is not different from Brahman, is of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss. But it wrongly identifies itself with body senses and mind due to *Avidya*. Because of this *Adhyasa* or Super-imposition, it undergoes joys and sorrows.

The Brahman otherwise known as The original **सत्**, which is without a second, contemplated to multiply Itself and did so. It entered the material bodies created by Itself. This is how, being bound by the limiting adjuncts, The Universal Soul came to be identified as Jivatman.

This fact is testified by the pronouncement of Taittireeya Upanishat.viz **तत्सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत्**

as well as of Chandogya Upanishat viz **बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति |**

The *Mahabharata* also endorses the same opinion:-

अव्यक्तरूपो भगवान् शतधा च सहस्रधा ।
शतधा सहस्रधाचैव तथा शतसहस्रधा
कोटिशश्च करोत्येष प्रत्यगात्मानमात्मना ।।
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 314-2,3)

Though *Paramatman* is formless, through his association with Maya, assumes uncountable forms.

स एव हृदि सर्वासु मूर्तिष्वातिष्ठतेऽऽत्मवान् ।
केवलश्चेतनो नित्यः सर्वमूर्तिरमूर्तिमान् ।।
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 302-40)

That Spirit which is entrenched in the recesses of all hearts is *jiva*. He is eternal. This is how *Kathopanishat* describes him:-

अग्निश्चैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतांतरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ।।
(Katha : 2-2-9)

Just as The Fire appears to possess different forms, so, The Brahman permeates the entire creation. When this Brahman, being eternal, and having Universal form, enters the human bodies, it is called *Jivatman*. In other words, because of these limiting adjuncts called body, senses, mind and ego, The Very Universal Soul comes to be recognised as The Jivatman.

मानसोऽग्निः शरीरेषु जीव इत्यभिधीयते ।
[Shanti Parva - Moksha Dharma : of 187-3]

The Mahabharata promulgates that the Spirit [*chaitanya]* otherwise known as Consciousness fused with the body is recognised as *jiva*:-

न जीव नाशोऽस्ति हि देहभेदे | मिथ्यैतदाहुर्मृत इत्यबुद्धाः ||
जीवस्तु देहांतरितः प्रयाति | दशार्धतैवास्य शरीरभेदः||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 187-27)

Jiva is eternal, and hence it is indestructible. Even when the body decays, the *jiva* does not get annihilated. When a body dies, the common parlance expression that the *jiva* was lost is nothing short of ignorance. When death occurs, only the material body ceases to work, and the life spirit enters another body. In the interregnum, it lives in the subtle elemental form called *lingashareera, which comprises* five subtle elements, five organs of action and five sensory organs, and the mind. The same idea is corroborated in the following Upanishadic statement :-

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ।
(Katha : 1-2-18)

Even upon the disintegration of the body, the soul remains constant and everlasting. *The Jiva* is superior to the senses, mind and intellect. It is known as *Kshetrajna.*

चित्तमिंद्रिय संघातात्परं तस्मात् परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिः क्षेत्रज्ञो बुद्धितः परः ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma)

Mahabharata also corroborates this idea that the mind is superior to the senses, the intellect is superior to the mind, and the subtle soul *Kshetrajna* is superior to the intellect:-

इंद्रियेभ्यः पराह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परंमनः ।
मनसस्तु पराबुद्धिः बुद्धेरात्मा महान् परः ॥
(Katha : 1-3-10)

The subtlety of the soul is superior to that of the senses, mind and soul. Due to psychological impressions or the past perceptions, *jiva* gets into the mundane cycle. This has been described through a simile in the *Mahabharata* :-

तदेव च यथा सूत्रं सुवर्णे वर्तते पुनः
मुक्तास्वथ प्रवालेषु मृण्मये राजते तथा ।
तद्वद्गोऽश्वमनुष्येषु तद्वद्धस्ति मृगादिषु
तद्वत्कीटपतंगेषु प्रसक्तात्मा स्वकर्मभिः ॥
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 206-2,3)

As one single string runs through the gold, pearl, coral or glass beads, to make a garland, so a single life-spirit runs through the different living beings viz ; human, divine, horse, elephant, deer, insect, fly or any other animate life. *Mahabharata* also mentions that the immobile animates such as trees, shrubs and creepers too have the same *jiva* operating in them:-

सुखदुःखस्य च ग्रहणात् छिन्नस्य च प्ररोहणात् ।
जीवं पश्यामि वृक्षाणामचैतन्यं न विद्यते ॥
(Shanti Parva : 87)

Though they are immobile, they can sense pain and pleasure, and grow again when chopped. This confirms that they have the life-spirit in them. Among the eighty four lakh species on earth, humans, animals, aviary and plants are all enumerated. The manifestation of *jiva* has thus been described in great detail in *Mahabharata.*

Cosmogony - *Srishti Shastra*

The same description of the creation of the universe as found in the Upanishads is endorsed by The Mahabharata. The *Brahmanandavalli* canto II of *Taittireeyopanishat* begins the narration thus:-

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म

[The characteristic Nature of The Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and infinity.]

Then it proceeds to explain as follows:-

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः आकाशाद्वायुः
वायोरग्निः अग्नेरापः अद्भ्यः पृथिवी पृथिव्या ओषधयः
ओषधीभ्योऽन्नं अन्नात् पुरुषः ।

The same idea of the process of creation is enunciated in The Mahabharata as follows:-

> अक्षरात् खं ततो वायुस्ततोज्योतिस्ततो जलम् ।
> जलात् प्रसूता जगती जगत्यां जायते जगत् ॥
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 202-1)

In the very beginning, The Space emanated from Brahman The Imperishable! The Wind emanated from this Space; from Wind, The Fire, and from The Fire The Water, and from The Water The Earth. From the Earth sprouted the herbage of all description. And from the herbage, food was prepared. From the food the human beings came out.

In the 182nd chapter of *Shanti Parva*, the order of Creation is narrated with a slight change as envisaged below, through the conversation between Bhrugu and Bharadvaja :-

> सोऽसृजत् प्रथमं देवो महान्तं नाम नामतः ।
> महान् ससर्जाहङ्कारं स चापि भगवानथ
> सरम् ॥ (Shanti Parva : 182-13)

The Brahman -The Self-born created the *Mahat* viz the Collective-Intellect. The Collective Ego was created from this *mahat*.

> आकाशमिति विख्यातं सर्वभूतधरः प्रभुः
> आकाशादभवद्वारि सलिलादग्निमारुतौ
> अग्निमारुतसंयोगात् ततः समभवन्मही
> (Shanti Parva : 182-14)

From the *Brahman* who sustains the entire creation, through this Ego. The Space was born. From the Space The Water emanated. From The Water, Fire and Wind came out. From the interaction of the Fire and Wind The Earth was born. This is how there is a little difference in the sequence of creation between The *Shrutis* and The *Mahabharata*.

The Universe - Jagat

Upanishadic statements describe the creation of the Universe. But those statements only indicate that the Universe emanated from The Brahman. These statements propound The *Brahmakaranavada*. Their aim is not to assert the reality of the Universe as The Brahman is The Only Ultimate Reality. The Universe is real from the empirical point of view.

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म and other Upanishadic utterances express that all that Is, is *Brahman*. *Mahabharata* also reiterates the same in **सर्वं विश्वं ब्रह्मचैतत् समस्तम्** (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma 318-89). When it is said that the Universe is a form of Brahman, it means that the universe has no independent existence. It is only apparent. Beyond the world of cause and effect, there is only one reality, and that is *Brahman*.

Shruti affirmations like **सदेव सौम्य इदमग्र आसीत्** | and **सदेव सत्यम्** etc expound the same principle. The sentence **वाचारंभणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम्** means that there is only one reality, i.e. *Brahman,* who is the cause of the entire universe including Space and other elements. Therefore, all that we see as the world is only apparent. A pot is contained in the clay. When the clay gets a different shape, it is called a pot or a dish. What is substantial is the clay. This analysis is versified beautifully in *Mahabharata* in the polemical dispute between *Suvarchala* and *Shwetaketu.*

> सदर्थे कल्पितं सर्वं तत्सत्यं विष्णुरेवच ।
> केवलं ज्ञानमात्रं तत् तस्मिन् सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 220)

The Brahman which is nothing but Reality, is the substratum of the Universe. The entire Universe, which is the subject of perception, is nothing but illusion.

Suvarchala, proceeds further and asks *Shwetaketu*.

> निर्विकारं ह्यमूर्तं च निरंशं सर्वगं यथा ।
> दृश्यते च वियन्नित्यं तादृगात्मा न दृश्यते ।।
>
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 220)

Space, though unmodified, formless, indivisible, and omnipresent, becomes the object of perception but The *Brahman*, though having the same description as that of Space, remains beyond perception. Why?

The reply from *Shwetaketu* to this question is as under :

> त्वचा स्पृशति वै वायुमाकाशस्थं पुनः पुनः ।
> तत्स्थं गन्धं तथाघ्राति ज्योतिः पश्यति चक्षुषा ।।
> तमोरश्मि गणंचैव मेघजालं तथैव च ।
> वर्षतारागणंचैव नाकाशं दृश्यते पुनः ।।
> आकाशस्याप्यथाकाशं सद्रूपमिति निश्चितम् ।
> सदर्थे कल्पितं सर्वं तत्सत्यं विष्णुरेव च ।।
>
> (Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 220)

Actually, The Space is not perceivable. It seems as though perceived, due to the other elements contained in it. The Wind is perceived through the touch organ; the smell through the olfactory organ; stars and other celestial bodies come to be perceived through the visual organ. But Space, being subtle, does not come to our perception. How then can The *Brahman*, who is subtler than the Space, be perceived ?

But, The Brahman of such description is the cause of the entire Creation.

One more feature of this episode is that it enunciates the illusoriness of the universe, through *Vacharambhana Shruti.*

The Nishprapanchatva [quality of being beyond all perception] and omnipresence of The Brahman are proved, beyond all reasonable doubt, by the Upanishadic statements viz **सदर्थे कल्पितं** and **ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं** | Another statement **तत् सत्यं विष्णुरेवच** initiates the discussion regarding the Nature of Brahman and reiterates that The Brahman is the only metaphysical Truth which is all pervading. The concluding portion also determines the identity of Jivatman and Brahman through Mahavakyas viz Thou art That *[Tattvamasi]* etc.

Thus, the apparent nature of the Universe is established in The Mahabharata.

Nature of Salvation

Moksha or final liberation is the ultimate goal of every human being. Liberation is freedom from bondage of Samsara Cakra i.e. the cycle of birth and rebirth. Therefore Moksha is nothing but attainment of immortality. One who has attained this state of immortality by realising one's Self will not fall again in the recurring cycle of births and deaths. Therefore the Liberation is just the realisation of the Real Nature of the Soul. According to the Upanishads the individual Soul is essentially identical with The Supreme Soul or The Brahman. But, due to beginningless Avidya or Ignorance he has the wrong notion of duality and difference. When an individual Soul contemplates on himself and realises his own Nature, he experiences that he is Brahman Himself. The same idea is conveyed in *the Mahabharata.*

> सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि |
> यदा पश्यति भूतात्मा ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ||
>
> (Anushasanika Parva : 149-6)

The aspirant, when he feels his presence everywhere, and everything in himself, becomes Brahman. This is reiterated in the Ishavasya Upanishat in the following way:-

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः |
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः एकत्वमनुपश्यतः||
(Ishavasya : 7)

When the seeker apprehends that all beings are not essentially different from him, he surpasses all his joys, sorrows, and his delusion whatsoever.

Backing up the above idea of the Upanishat, the Mahabharata declares as under:-

तथा तं पुरुषं विश्वं परमं सुमहत्तरम् |
निर्गुणं निर्गुणाभूत्वा प्रविशन्ति सनातनम् ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 350-27)

Such seekers who divest themselves of all the Gunas [attributes], and incessantly contemplate on the Brahman, become one with Him who is Beginningless, and who is nothing but the cosmos.

The Mahabharata repeats the same in the following verse:-

पुरुषश्चैको निर्गुणो विश्वरुपः | तं निर्गुणं पुरुषमाविशन्ति|
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 351-10)

Now, The Mahabharata explains how one can attain Nirgunatva.

हित्वा गुणमयं सर्वं कर्म हित्वा शुभाशुभम् |
उभे सत्यानृते त्यक्त्वा एवं भवति निर्गुणः ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 351-11)

Shedding all that is within the purview of the Gunas [attributes] and renouncing all the actions good or evil, and forsaking Truth and Falsehood, the aspirant attains Nirgunatva. And such person becomes one with the Brahman.

The following mantra of Mahanarayana Upanishat viz -

तमेवं विद्वानमृत इह भवति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय

and in Shwetasvatara Upanishat as

तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ||

is corroborated by the following quotation of Mahabharata:-

अनागतं सुकृतवतां परां गतिं | स्वयम्भुवं प्रभवनिधानमव्ययम् ||
सनातनं यदमृतमव्ययं ध्रुवम् | निचाय्य तत्परममृतत्वमश्नुते ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 206-32)

That seeker will accomplish immortality through his wisdom and attain The Brahman who is beginningless, who is the final goal of meritorious deeds, who is the primordial cause of the entire creation, who is unaffected, who is immortal, who is changeless, and who is eternal. Such an aspirant goes beyond the bondage of birth and death.

The Knowledge of *Parabrahma* confers immortality on the seeker. There is no other way. One who attains immortality will not relapse into the cycle of births and deaths. The Mantra **न स पुनरावर्तते** [one who is relieved will not return to Earth.] also confirms the above statement.

The following Mantra explains the method to be pursued for such realisation :-

एवं सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढश्चरति संवृतः |
दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 187-28)

This Ultimate Principle called The Brahman, though seems hidden, pervades all the Beings. Such Brahman is perceived by the untiring aspirants who, through their sharpest and perspicacious intellect, realise Him.

The following Mantra of Katha Upanishat supports the above verse of the Mahabharata:-

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽत्मा न प्रकाशते |
दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ||

Only true knowledge can provide salvation. Upanishadic utterances like **न हि ज्ञानादृते मोक्षः ; तमेव विदित्वा अतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय** trumpet the declaration that only knowledge provides salvation.

Mahabharata continues to provide another path of realisation in the following verse.

ज्ञानान्मोक्षो जयते राजसिंह | नास्त्यज्ञानादेवमाहुर्नरेन्द्र ||
तस्माज्ज्ञानं तत्त्वतोऽन्वेषितव्यम् | | येनात्मानं मोक्षयेज्जन्ममृत्योः||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 318-87)

While teaching *Janaka,* Sage *Yajnavalkya* explains that such a *sadhaka* who realizes the nature of his soul, is freed from births and deaths. Of course, good deeds take us to the divine worlds. But, one has to inevitably return to this earth, when the fruits of his merit are exhausted.

कर्मणा जायते प्रेत्य मूर्तिमान् शोडशात्मकः |
विद्यया जायते नित्यमव्ययोऽक्षरात्मकः||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 240-11)

Meritorious deeds are not the means to *moksha*. Good actions may elevate a person to the Heavenly worlds. But they can not save him from the bondage of births and deaths. On the contrary, salvation, frees him from this fear of return because Salvation is the result of knowledge which makes him attain the final deliverance:-

कर्मणः फलमाप्नोति सुखदुःखे भवाभवौ |
विद्यया तदवाप्नोति यत्र गत्वा न मुह्यति ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 240-12)

The Deeds *(karma)* will invariably yield pleasure, pain, birth and death. But it is *jnana* that annihilates grief and infatuation. On attainment of Jnana, there would be no need to experience the painful confines of a human womb again.

Mahabharata describes the means of salvation thus :

तं पूर्वपररात्रेषु युञ्जानः सततं बुधः |
लघ्वाहारो विशुद्धात्मा पश्यत्यात्मानमात्मनि ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 187-29)

The inner soul of an aspirant gets purified through the consumption of limited food, and constant spiritual contemplation. Such a person, realises himself in himself. Knowledge cannot blossom without a pure mind, as a dusted mirror will not efficiently reflect the object.

चित्तस्य हि प्रसादेन हित्वा कर्म शुभाशुभम् |
प्रसन्नात्माऽत्मनि स्थित्वा सुखमात्यन्तमश्नुते||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 187-30)

On the attainment of pure mind the aspirant naturally gets dissociated from good and bad deeds. His mind becomes pellucid and tranquil and such a person stays well settled in the Atman and experiences unlimited bliss. Agnihotra and other rituals enjoined by the Vedas, fall under the category of active mundane paths. Salvation becomes easy by following the path of renunciation.

तस्माज्ज्ञानं पुरस्कृत्य सन्यसेदिह बुद्धिमान् |
संन्यासी ज्ञानसंयुक्तः प्राप्नोति परमां गतिम् ||
अतीतोऽद्वन्द्वमभ्येति तमोमृत्युजरातिगः |
(Ashwamedhika Parva : 43-26,27)

While Karma-Yoga paths fall under the category of mundane engagement, *jnana* path falls under renunciation. Therefore, the discerning *sadhaka* should opt for *jnana* and take to renunciation abandoning all worldly attachments. In other words, he must free himself from worldly bonds. Thus liberated, the *jnani* will pass over old-age and death, reject all dualities like joy and sorrow, and attain the highest state.

Gradual Salvation - Kramamukti

Aspirants desirous of liberation, with a firm intention take up *sanyasa* and perform penance, and proceed to the abode of *Brahman.*

When they dwell upon the *Brahman* principle incessantly, they will gradually merge into the *Paramatma* principle. This gradual transition is called *kramamukti* in Vedanta. This is mentioned in the *Mahabharata*.

मोक्षाश्रमं यश्चरते यथोक्तं शुचिः सुसंकल्पितमुक्तबुद्धिः |
अनिन्धनं ज्योतिरिव प्रशान्तं स ब्रह्मलोकं श्रयते मनुष्यः ||
(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma:192-6)

This very idea is corroborated in Prashna as well as in Chandogya Upanishats.

एवं सः वै पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः स सामभिरुन्नीयते ब्रह्मलोकम् |
(Prashna : 5-5)

Prashna Upanishat avers that he, who is purged of all his sins, through incessant contemplation of Pranava [Omkara] attains Brahmaloka. The hymns of Sama Veda assist him in this process of upward journey.

Likewise this gradual Salvation is referred to in *Daharavidya* of Chandogya Upanishat too.

Liberation while living - *Jivanmukti*

Mahabharata describes the characteristic features of *Jivanmukta* too. The Upanishats proclaim '*Brahman*'hood can be experienced here and now. **अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते** [Katha Upanishat]. Mahanarayana Upanishat also promulgates :- [The Wise].. secures immortality here in this world itself, **अमृत इह भवति**. Bruhadaranyaka also proclaims ---The aspirant dissolves and becomes united with The Brahman here and now, **अत्रैव समवलीयन्ते**.These and such other Upanishadic pronouncements assert that the Unity with Brahman is possible in this very life. Jivanmukti is that type of Liberation wherein an individual aspirant attains deliverance while yet alive in this world. He seems to carry out all his mundane activities, till he casts off his mortal coil. But he is devoid of all interest and attachment of the empirical world. This can be seen in the following verses of Mahabharata.

तस्माद्गुणांश्च सत्त्वं च परित्यज्येह तत्त्ववित् |
क्षीणदोषो गुणातीतः क्षेत्रज्ञं प्रविशत्यथ ||
(Ashwamedhika Parva : 43-41)

That spiritual aspirant should totally give up, here and now, all the vices and other powerful bonds. Thus he becomes impeccable, and transcends all the Gunas, and attains the *Kshetrajna*hood or enters the Abode of *Paramatman.*

The next verse of *The Mahabharata* defines the word *Kshetrajna,* employed in the previous verse:-

निर्द्वंद्वो निर्नमस्कारो निःस्वाहाकार एव च |
अचलश्चानिकेतश्च क्षेत्रज्ञः स परो विभुः||
(Ashwamedhika Parva : 43-41)

Thus, the accomplished Soul, [rightly known as *Jivanmukta*], transcends the pair of opposites like joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, etc. He need not bow down in reverence to anybody. He need neither propitiate the Gods by sacrifices, nor offer oblations to divine beings nor the manes to the departed ancestral souls. He stays still, tranquil and steady, firm and steadfast. He renounces all his belongings, his house his wealth etc and attaining the omnipresent *Brahman*-hood, he moves about in ecstasy. He is termed as *Kshetrajna*.

The traits and special features of J*ivanmuktas* have been brought out in the spiritual dialogue between Bheeshma and Yudhishtira.

त्यक्त्वा यः प्राकृतं कर्म नित्यमात्मरतिर्मुनिः |
सर्वभूतात्मभूस्तस्मात् स गच्छेत् परमां गतिम् ||

(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 194-46)

He, who is able to cast away the trifling family chores, and detach himself from his mundane affairs, and engages himself with his True Self, is a wise *Muni.* He realizes that his Soul is verily The Universal Soul pervading everywhere. Such a *Muni* attains the Supreme Refuge i.e. Salvation.

यथा वारिचरः पक्षी सलिलेन न लिप्यते |
एवमेव कृतप्रज्ञो भूतेषु परिवर्तते||

(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 194-47)

Just as the water bird, though dwelling and diving in the water, does not become wet, so also the immaculate wise man, remains untainted by the vices of this world. That is to say, though he enjoys all material pleasures, he remains unmoved and unaffected. [Fine notes of enchanting music, soft and ensnaring touch, bewitching beauty, salivating` food-stuffs, tempting odours will not be able to fetter him.]

एवं स्वभावमेवैतत् स्वबुद्ध्या विहरेन्नरः |
अशोचन्नप्रहर्ष्यंश्च समो विगतमत्सरः||

(Shanti Parva-Moksha Dharma : 192-6)

Through his balanced thinking, The Wise Man gains the conviction that The Atman is uncontaminated and Pure. Hence, he also gets purged off all emotions like joy, sorrow, envy, and treats all the beings equally and with mental poise.

Mahabharata continues to describes the characteristic features of a *jivanmukta* as under:-

यदा संहरते कामान् कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः |
तदात्मज्योतिरचिरात् स्वात्मन्येव प्रपश्यति ||

[Shanti Parva 21-3]

When a tortoise senses danger, it withdraws all its limbs into its shell and remains fearless. So too, when a *sadhaka* is able to withdraw all his sensual appetites, he sees the self-luminous *paramatma* shining within him.

न बिभेति यदा चायं यदा चास्मान् न बिभ्यति |
कामद्वेषौ जयति तदात्मानं प्रपश्यति ||

[Shanti Parva 21-4]

The realised Soul is not afraid of anything, either from within or from without. Nor is there any fear from him to others. He has conquered lust and hatred. The Upanishat proclaims द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति that the Fear is always caused by something else than him. But in the settled opinion of a Jnani, there is no second thing, as separate from him, existing. Because everything is his own self. The Upanishat proclaiming अथि यं वै जनक प्राप्तोऽसि 'Oh King Janaka ! Thou hast attained the status of fearlessness' exactly enunciates this fearlessness.

यदा चासौ सर्वभूतानां न द्रुह्यति न कांङ्क्षति |
कर्मणा मनसा वाचा ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ||

The Realised Soul [*Jivanmukta*] sees his own self in all, since he has undergone the experience of The Brahman.

Therefore he does not betray others. Desires of any kind do not tease him.

This is how, Mahabharata displays the divine characteristics of a *Jivanmukta*.

Conclusion-*Upasamhara*

Mahabharata, is a rich treasure-house of thoughts pertaining to religion, secularism, morality and philosophy. Different branches of thought, current in the contemporary society, like Charvaka, Sougata, Sankhya, Yoga, have been incidentally dealt with. The Mahabharata has made references to all of them, and has critically examined them in their own rights and has finally refuted them.

It has ultimately upheld the philosophy promulgated in the Upanishats. 'Brahman is the only Reality. The Universe, seen different from The Brahman is not essentially true. 'Jivatman is none other than Paramatman' is the philosophy propagated all through the Mahabharata. This can be known by a careful, exhaustive and comprehensive study of the Mahabharata.

Sanatsujatiya, and The Bhagavadgita, forming inseparable parts of Mahabharata furnish ample proofs for the above statement. Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada has composed authentic, faithful and dependable commentaries on these two spiritual discourses.

Even according to *Neelakantha,* another commentator on the entire Mahabharata, the epic professes the same Vedanta philosophy that is taught by the *Upanishads*.

It will be quite clear to an unprejudiced scholar, studying the verses of Mahabharata that *Vedanta* in Mahabharata is synonymous with *Brahmatmaikyajnana* enunciated in the *Upanishads*. There is no place for either doubt or argument about The *Upanishadic Vedanta* being the essential philosophy promulgated in this great Epic.

Note :

I have referred the edition of Mahabharata published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur and the Kumbhakonam edition. The serial numbers of the references quoted by me in the article may vary from edition to edition. I am sure that the discerning readers will reconcile accordingly. ❑

'Droupadi' by Dr. Soundarya Srivatsa

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ನುಡಿಬೆಡಗು

—ಶತಾವಧಾನಿ ಡಾ॥ ಆರ್. ಗಣೇಶ್

ಭಗವಾನ್ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಸಕಲಾರ್ಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶ್ವಕೋಶ; ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸನು ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ "ಕಾವ್ಯಕೆ ಗುರು." ಇದು ಕಾಮಧೇನುವಿನಂತೆ ಎಲ್ಲರ ಬಯಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ತೀರಿಸಬಲ್ಲ ತವನಿಧಿ. ಇತಿಹಾಸ, ಕಾವ್ಯ, ಕಥೆ, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಪುರಾಣ, ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಅರ್ಥಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ವೇದಾಂತವೇ ಮುಂತಾದ ಅಸಂಖ್ಯಮುಖಗಳ ಭಾರತೀಯ ವಿದ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಅರಿತು ಆಸ್ವಾದಿಸಲು ಬಯಸುವವರಿಗೆ ಇದೊಂದೇ ಶರಣ್ಯ. ಇಂಥ ಮಹಾಕೃತಿಯ ಒಂದು ಆಯಾಮವೇ ಅದರ ಭಾಷಾಪಾಕ, ಮತ್ತು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ಕಾಣಬಲ್ಲ ಒಂದು ಪುಟ್ಟ ಕೋಣವೇ ನುಡಿಬೆಡಗಿನ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಗಳು, ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು, ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸಮಾಸಗಳು, ವಿನೂತನ ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ರೋಚಕವಾದ ಉಪಚಾರವಕ್ರತೆಗಳು ತುಂಬಿವೆ.

ಯದ್ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಮಹಾವ್ಯೋಮ್ನಿ ಕ್ರಿಯತೇ ತಚ್ಚರಾಚರಮ್ ।
ತಸ್ಮೈ ಜ್ಞೇಯದರಿದ್ರಾಯ ನಮೋ ಭಾರತವೇಧಸೇ ॥

(ವರದವಿದ್ವಾಂಸನ "ಜ್ಞಾನಪಂಜರ" ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ)

(ಯಾರ ಅನುಭವಜನ್ಯಜ್ಞಾನವೆಂಬ ಮಹಾಕಾಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಕಲಚರಾಚರಗಳೂ ರೂಪಿತವಾಗುವುವೋ ಅಂಥ ಭಾರತಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಿಗೆ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರ. ಆ ಕೃತಿಯೂ ಅದರ ಕರ್ತೃವೂ ನಮ್ಮ ಪಾಲಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಮತ್ತಾವುದನ್ನೂ ಉಳಿಸಿಲ್ಲ.)

ಭಗವಾನ್ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಸಕಲಾರ್ಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶ್ವಕೋಶ; ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸನು ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ "ಕಾವ್ಯಕೆ ಗುರು." ಇದು ಕಾಮಧೇನುವಿನಂತೆ ಎಲ್ಲರ ಬಯಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ತೀರಿಸಬಲ್ಲ ತವನಿಧಿ. ಇತಿಹಾಸ, ಕಾವ್ಯ, ಕಥೆ, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಪುರಾಣ, ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಅರ್ಥಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ವೇದಾಂತವೇ ಮುಂತಾದ ಅಸಂಖ್ಯ ಮುಖಗಳ ಭಾರತೀಯ ವಿದ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಅರಿತು ಆಸ್ವಾದಿಸಲು ಬಯಸುವವರಿಗೆ ಇದೊಂದೇ ಶರಣ್ಯ. ಇಂಥ ಮಹಾಕೃತಿಯ ಒಂದು ಆಯಾಮವೇ ಅದರ ಭಾಷಾಪಾಕ, ಮತ್ತು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ಕಾಣಬಲ್ಲ ಒಂದು ಪುಟ್ಟ ಕೋಣವೇ ನುಡಿ ಬೆಡಗಿನ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯ.[1] ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಗಳು, ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು, ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸಮಾಸಗಳು, ವಿನೂತನವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ರೋಚಕವಾದ ಉಪಚಾರವಕ್ರತೆಗಳು ತುಂಬಿವೆ.

ಸದ್ಯದ ಲೇಖನ ಈ ಕೆಲವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಹಿತ–ಮಿತಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಚರ್ಚಿಸುವುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಜೀವತ್ಕಾಂತಿಯೂ ವಾಚಕರಿಗೆ ಪರಿಚಿತವಾಗದಿರದು. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಕವಿಬ್ರಹ್ಮರಾದ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಬರೆಯುವ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದ ದೇವವಾಣೀತ್ವದಷ್ಟೇ ಮರ್ತ್ಯವಾಣೀತ್ವವೂ ಸಮೃದ್ಧವಾಗಿತ್ತು, ಸಾರ್ಥಕವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಇದು ಭಾಷಾಭ್ಯಾಸಿಗಳಿಗೂ ಬೋಧಪ್ರದ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವಾಣಿಯನ್ನು ಕೃತಕವೆಂದು ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸುವ ಅವಿಚಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವನ್ನು ತಿದ್ದಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅವಕಾಶವನ್ನೂ ಒದಗಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಮೇಲೆ ಹೇಳಿದಂತೆ ಐದು ವಿಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ನುಡಿಬೆಡಗುಗಳನ್ನು[2] ವಿಭಜಿಸಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಬಗೆಯ ಸ್ಥೂಲವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ತುಂಬ ಆಳವಾದ ತರ್ಕವಿಲ್ಲ. ಏನಿದ್ದರೂ ವ್ಯಾವಹಾರಿಕವಾದ ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಸೌಕರ್ಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಇಂಥ ಒಂದು ವಿಭಾಗಕ್ರಮ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವಾದೀತು. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಅವೆಷ್ಟೋ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ವರ್ಗಕ್ಕೂ ಸೇರಬಹುದಾಗಿವೆಯೆಂದು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಿಗೆ ತೋರಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ವಿಭಾಗಕ್ರಮದ ಪರಮಾರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಅಷ್ಟಾಗಿ ಚಿಂತಿಸದೆ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳನ್ನಷ್ಟೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಭಾಷೆಯ ಸಹಜವಾದ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ–ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಗಳು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮನದಟ್ಟಾಗದಿರವು. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ, ಈ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೆ ವ್ಯಾಪಕರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಾಲತಿಗೆ ತರುವ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳವರಿಗೂ ಇವು ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ನೆರವನ್ನು ನೀಡಬಲ್ಲುವು.

ಅಶ್ವಘೋಷ–ಕಾಳಿದಾಸರಿಗಿಂತ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವು ಹೇಗಿತ್ತೆಂಬ ಮಾದರಿ ನಮಗೆ ವಿಪುಲವಾಗಿ ಸಿಗುವುದು ವ್ಯಾಸ–ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿಗಳ ಆರ್ಷಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೇ. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಭಾಷೆ ವೇದವಾಙ್ಮಯಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ವಿಭಿನ್ನ, ಸರಳ. ಆದರೆ ಅಭಿಜಾತಕವಿಗಳ ನುಡಿಬಳಕೆಗಿಂತ ಗಣನೀಯವಾಗಿ ಪುರಾತನ, ಸಹಜ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಯಾವುದೇ ಭಾಷಾಭ್ಯಾಸಿಗೆ ತುಂಬ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿಮುನಿಗಳ ಭಾಷೆಗೂ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರ ವಾಣಿಗೂ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಅಂತರವಿದೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಪರಿಣತರು ಮಾತ್ರ ಅರಿಯಬಲ್ಲರು. ಈ ಬಗೆಯ ವಾಗ್ವೈವಿಧ್ಯವನ್ನು ಗಮನದಲ್ಲಿರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಋಷಿಕವಿಗಳಿಬ್ಬರ ಬರೆಹಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಸಂಧಾನಿಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವುಂಟು.

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1. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 'ಇಡಿಯಮ್' ಅಥವಾ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಸಂವಾದಿಯಾಗಿ 'ವಾಚೋಯುಕ್ತಿ' ಮತ್ತು 'ವಚೋವಿಚ್ಛಿತ್ತಿ'ಗಳೆಂಬ ಶಬ್ದಗಳನ್ನು ಆಧುನಿಕ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು (ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಎನ್. ರಂಗನಾಥಶರ್ಮಾ ಮತ್ತು ಡಾ॥ ಪುಲ್ಲೆಲ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಚಂದ್ರುಡು) ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಬಹುಶಃ ಅಲಂಕಾರಿಕತಲ್ಲಜನಾದ ಕುಂತಕನ "ಭಂಗೀಭಣಿತಿ" ಎಂಬ ಶಬ್ದವೇ ಇವುಗಳ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನರೂಪ.

2. ಈ ಲೇಖನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಕ್ತಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಪುಣೆಯ ಭಂಡಾರ್ಕರ್ ಪ್ರಾಚ್ಯವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯದ ಪರಿಷ್ಕೃತ ಪಾಠ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿವೆ.

೧. ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಗಳು

ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಗಳೆಂದರೆ ನಿತ್ಯದ ಮಾತು-ಕತೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತೆ ಮಿಂಚುವ ಸಹಜವಾದ ಚಮತ್ಕಾರಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಸುಲಭೀಕರಣದ ತಂತ್ರಗಳು. ಇವುಗಳ ಪರಿಧಿ ಬಹಳ ದೊಡ್ಡದು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ವಿಭಾಗದೊಳಗೆ ಸೇರಬಲ್ಲ ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ಅಂಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಧ್ಯಯನಸೌಕರ್ಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾದ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕೃತಿಯ ಮೊದಲಿಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮಹತ್ತ್ವವನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವಾಗ ಒಂದೆಡೆ ಇದನ್ನೂ ಮತ್ತೊಂದೆಡೆ ವೇದಗಳನ್ನೂ ಇಟ್ಟು ತೂಗಿದಾಗ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಭಾರವಾಯಿತೆಂಬ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ನಮ್ಮ ಅನುದಿನದ ಆಡುನುಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು: "ಇದೊಂದು ಕಡೆ ಅದೊಂದು ಕಡೆ ತೂಗಿ ನೋಡಿದರೆ ಅದೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ತೂಕ ಇದೆ." ಇಂಥ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿ ಎಲ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕಂಡುಬರುವಂಥದ್ದು. ಇದನ್ನು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು:

ಚತ್ವಾರ ಏಕತೋ ವೇದಾ ಭಾರತಂ ಚೈಕಮೇಕತಃ (೧.೧.೨೦೮)

ಆಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ನಾವು ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಕೇಳುತ್ತೇವೆಂಬ ಇಂಗಿತವನ್ನು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಪಡಿಸುವ ವ್ಯಾಸವಾಕ್ಯವೊಂದು ಹೀಗಿದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಕಲ್ಯಾ ಸ್ಮ" ಎಂಬ ಅಪೂರ್ವಪದಪುಂಜ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ:

ಕಥಯಸ್ವ ಕಥಾಮೇತಾಂ ಕಲ್ಯಾ ಸ್ಮ ಶ್ರವಣೇ ತವ (೧.೫.೩)

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮ ವ್ಯವಹಾರದಲ್ಲಿ "ಮದುವೇನ ಮುಂದಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಈ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡೋದುಂಟಾ?," "ತಿಥೀನ ಮುಂದಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ದೇವಸ್ಥಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಗಬಹುದಾ?" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ನುಸುಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದರ ತದ್ವತ್ತಾದ ಸ್ವರೂಪವನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು:

ವಿವಾಹಂ ಸ್ಥಾಪಯಿತ್ವಾಗ್ರೇ (೧.೮.೧೩)

ಜನರೇ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಎಡೆಯನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ "ನಿರ್ಜನ," "ನಿರ್ಮಾನುಷ"ವೆಂಬಂಥ ಪದಗಳು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಪುಲವಾಗಿವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಗಂಡೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ಪುರುಷಪದವನ್ನು ಹೀಗೆ ಬಳಸುವುದು ವಿರಳ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಲತಃ ಪುರುಷಶಬ್ದವು ಸ್ತ್ರೀ-ಪುರುಷಭೇದವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದಿರಬಹುದಾದ ಪ್ರಯೋಗವೊಂದನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು:

ತತೋ ನಿಷ್ಪುರುಷಂ ಶೈಲಂ ಹಿಮಸಂರುದ್ಧಕಂದರಮ್ (೧.೨೬.೧೭)

ನಾವು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ "ಇದೊ, ಈ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟೆ," "ಇದೊ, ಇದನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಸುಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಯಾಗಿ ಕೇಳುಗನ ಗಮನವನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಯವೊಂದೆಡೆ, ತಾಣವೊಂದೆಡೆ ಸೆಳೆಯುವಂತೆ ಮಾತಾಡುವುದುಂಟು. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಯೋಗವಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಅಮೃತವನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸುವ ಗರುಡನು ತನಗೆದುರಾದ ಇಂದ್ರನನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತಿದು. ಅವನ ವಜ್ರಾಯುಧಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರತಿಯಾಗಿ ತನ್ನದೊಂದು ಗರಿಯನ್ನು ಜಾರಿಸುವೆನೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು ಆ ಆಯುಧಕ್ಕೆ ಇವನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಗೌರವವೆಂಬುದು ಒಂದು ಇಂಗಿತ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ನಿನ್ನ ವಜ್ರಾಯುಧ ನನ್ನ ಒಂದು ಗರಿಯಷ್ಟು ಮಾತ್ರದ ಯೋಗ್ಯತೆಯದೆಂಬ ಗೇಲಿಯ ಧ್ವನಿಯೂ ಉಂಟು. ಇಂಥ ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಗ್ರಾಮ್ಯಕಲಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುದಿನವೂ ಕೇಳಬಹುದಾದ ಕಾರಣ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಬೇಕಿಲ್ಲ.

ಏಷ ಪತ್ರಂ ತ್ಯಜಾಮ್ಯೇಕಮ್ (೧.೨೯.೨೦)

ಯಾವುದೇ ಕೆಲಸವು ಸಂಪನ್ನವಾದಾಗ ಅದು ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಯಿತೆಂಬಂತೆ ಹೇಳುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ "ಎಲ್ಲ ಸರಿಯಾಯಿತು," "ಎಲ್ಲ ಅಚ್ಚುಕಟ್ಟಾಯಿತು" ಎನ್ನುವಂಥ ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸುತ್ತೇವಷ್ಟೆ. ಇವುಗಳ ಧ್ವನಿಯನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು:

ಉಪಪನ್ನಮಿತಿ ಬ್ರುವನ್ (೧.೩೬.೫) **ಉಪಪನ್ನಮಿದಂ ಪಾರ್ಥ** (೫.೭.೩೫)

ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಬಾಯಿಬಿಟ್ಟು ಹೇಳಲು ಮುಜುಗರವಾಗುವ ಸಂಗತಿಗಳನ್ನು "ಅದು," "ಇದು" ಎಂಬ ಸರ್ವನಾಮಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ, ಇಲ್ಲವೆ "ಇದೆ," "ಇಲ್ಲ" ಎಂಬಂಥ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಪದಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ನಾವು ಸೂಚಿಸಿ ಬಿಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಸಂದರ್ಭವೇ ಸದ್ಯದ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಜರತ್ಕಾರುವಿಗೆ ತನ್ನ ಗಂಡನಿಂದ ಗರ್ಭವುಂಟಾಗಿದೆಯೇ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಎಂಬ ಸಂದೇಹವನ್ನು

ನಿವಾರಿಸಲು "ಇದೆಯೆಂದು ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸಿ" ಎಂಬ ಈ ಮಾತು ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಉದರಮುದ್ದಿಶ್ಯ" ಎಂಬ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಸೂಚಕವಾದ ವಾಕ್ಯಭಾಗವು ತುಂಬ ಅರ್ಥಪೂರ್ಣ.

ಅಸ್ತೀತ್ಯುದರಮುದ್ದಿಶ್ಯ (೧.೪೪.೧೦)
ಮತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತೆ ನಮ್ಮ ವ್ಯವಹಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಶ್ಚಾತ್ತಾಪದ ಧ್ವನಿಯಾಗಿ "ಕೈಕೈ ಹಿಸುಕಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು" ಎಂಬ ಪದಪುಂಜದ ಬಳಕೆಯಿದೆ. ಅದರ ತದ್ವತ್ತಾದ ಅನುವಾದ ಇಲ್ಲಿದೆ:

ಪರ್ಯತಪ್ಯತ ದುಃಖಾರ್ತಃ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಪಿಂಷತ್ ಕರೇ ಕರಮ್ (೧.೪೬.೩೩)
[ಇದರ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ರೂಪವನ್ನೂ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು: ಪಾಣೌ ಪಾಣಿಂ ವಿನಿಷ್ಪಿಷ್ಯ (೨.೬೧.೧೮)]

ವಿಪ್ರಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಧ್ವನಿಪೂರ್ಣವಾದ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿ "ಬ್ರಹ್ಮದಂಡ"ವೆಂದೇ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಿಂದ ಈಚೆಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ:

ಬ್ರಹ್ಮದಂಡನಿಪೀಡಿತಾಃ (೧.೫೨.೨೨)
ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ "ಲೋಪ್ತ್ರ"ಪದಕ್ಕೆ "ಅಪಹರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಸೊತ್ತು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವುಂಟು. ಆದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಅಪಹೃತವಾದದ್ದೇ ಅಪಹರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಸೊತ್ತೆನ್ನುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಮೂಲತಃ ಆ ಸಂಪತ್ತಿಯೇ ಅನ್ಯಾಯದ್ದೆಂಬ, ಅಥವಾ ಕಳ್ಳರು ಕದಿಯಲು ಅರ್ಹವಾದುದನ್ನೇ ಕದಿಯುವರೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುವಂತೆ ಈ ಪದದ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿರುವುದು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ:

ದಸ್ಯವೋ ಲೋಪ್ತ್ರಹಾರಿಣಃ (೧. ೧೦೧.೪)
ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಸ್ವಪಕ್ಷಸ್ಥಾಪನೆಯ ಭರದಲ್ಲಿ ಶಪಥಪೂರ್ವಕವಾಗಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವಾಗ "ನಾನು ನಾನೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ," "ನಾನು ನನ್ನ ಅಪ್ಪನಿಗೇ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ" ಎಂಬಿವೇ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಪದಪುಂಜಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಇಂಥ ಒಂದು ರೋಚಕ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯನ್ನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ಸ್ವಯಂವರಕ್ಕೆ ವೇಷ ಮರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದ ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಗುರುತಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು. ಅವನು ಬಲರಾಮನಿಗೆ ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ತೊರಿಸಿಕೊಡುವಾಗ, "ನಾನು ನಮ್ಮಪ್ಪನ ಮಗನೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ (ಯದ್ಯಸ್ಮಿ ವಾಸುದೇವಃ) ಇಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣವೇಷಧಾರಿಗಳು ಪಾಂಡವರೇ ಸರಿ" ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾನೆ:

ಯದ್ಯಸ್ಮಿ ಸಂಕರ್ಷಣ ವಾಸುದೇವಃ (೧.೧೮೧.೧೮)
ನಾಚಿಕೆಯ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ಆಂಗಿಕವಾಗಿ ಸೂಚಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲವನ್ನು ಕಾಲ್ಬೆರಳಿನಿಂದ ಕೆರೆಯುವ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ. ಇದು ನೃತ್ಯ-ನಾಟಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಅಭಿನಯಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಎರಡು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವೀಗ ನೋಡಬಹುದು:

ಚರಣೇನಾಲಿಖನ್ಮಹೀಮ್ (೩.೧೧.೨೯)
ವಿಲಿಖಂತಂ ವಸುಂಧರಾಮ್ (೩.೧೧.೩೦)
ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅತಿಶಯವಾಗಿ ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ "ನೀನು ಜಾಣರ ಜಾಣನಾಗುತ್ತೀಯೆ," "ದೊರೆಗಳ ದೊರೆಯಾಗುತ್ತೀಯೆ" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ:

ರಾಜ್ಞಾಂ ರಾಜ್ಞೀ ಭವಿಷ್ಯಸಿ (೩.೧೩.೧೧೬)
ಅನುಕರಣಶಬ್ದಗಳು ನಿತ್ಯವ್ಯವಹಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪಾರ. ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇವು ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಕಿರಾತರೂಪಿ ಶಿವ ಮತ್ತು ಅರ್ಜುನರು ಮುಷ್ಟಾಮುಷ್ಟಿ ಯುದ್ಧ ಮಾಡುವಾಗ ಹೊರಟ ಶಬ್ದವನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಹೀಗೆ ರೂಪಿಸಿದೆ:

ಚಟಚಟಾಶಬ್ದಃ (೩.೪೦.೪೫)
ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ "ಹೋಗ್ತಾ ಹೋಗ್ತಾ ಅವನು ಹೀಗಾದ," "ಬರ್ತಾ ಬರ್ತಾ ಅವರು ಹಾಳಾದರು" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳುಂಟು. ಅಂಥದ್ದೇ ಒಂದು ಪದಪುಂಜ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ನಲೋಪಾಖ್ಯಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗಿದೆ:

ಗತ್ವಾ ಗತ್ವಾ ನಲೋ ರಾಜಾ (೩.೫೯.೨೨)
ಪಯಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಣಿಯಾಗಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ "ದಾರಿ ತೋರಿಸು" ಎಂಬ ಮಾತು ರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ "ಮಾರ್ಗಮಾದಿಶ"

ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಪಯಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುವಾದ ವಾಹನದತ್ತ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ "ಯಾನಮಾದಿಶ" ಎಂಬ ಪ್ರಯೋಗ ಮಾಡಿದೆ. ಇದು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹವಾದ ವೈಚಿತ್ರ್ಯ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇವಲ ಪ್ರದೇಶವೊಂದನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುವಾಗ ನಪುಂಸಕಲಿಂಗದ ಏಕವಚನ (ಉದಾ: "ಕರ್ಣಾಟಮ್") ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೂ ಜನಭರಿತವಾದ ಜನಪದವೊಂದನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸಲು ಪುಲ್ಲಿಂಗ–ಬಹುವಚನವನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವುದುಂಟು ("ಕರ್ಣಾಟಾಃ"). ಇದೊಂದು ವ್ಯಾಕರಣವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯವೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಪ್ರಯೋಗವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು ("ವಿದರ್ಭಾನ್"):

ವಿದರ್ಭಾನ್ ಯಾತುಮಿಚ್ಛಾಮಿ ಶೀಘ್ರಂ ಮೇ ಯಾನಮಾದಿಶ (೩.೬೬.೧೯)

ಋಷಿಕುಮಾರ ಋಶ್ಯಶೃಂಗ ಹೆಣ್ಣನ್ನೇ ಕಾಣದೆ ಬೆಳೆದವನು. ಅವನು ಮೊದಲ ಬಾರಿಗೆ ಬೈತಲೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೆರಳು ಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡ ಹೆಂಗಸರನ್ನು ಕಂಡಾಗ ಅವರ ಹಣೆಯೇ ಎರಡು ಪಾಲಾದಂತೆ ಭ್ರಮಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅದನ್ನು ತುಂಬ ಚಮತ್ಕಾರಕವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಹೇಳುವ ಪರಿ ಹೀಗಿದೆ:

ದ್ವೈಧೀಕೃತಾ ಭಾಂತಿ ಸಮಾ ಲಲಾಟೇ (೩.೧೧೨.೯)

ತೀರ್ಥಯಾತ್ರೆಗೆಂದು ಪ್ರಭಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದ ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಬಲರಾಮ ಮಾತನಾಡಿಸುತ್ತ "ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಿಗೆ ಭೂಮಿಯು ಎಡೆಯನ್ನು ಕೊಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಸಮಾಧಾನ ಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾರನ್ನಾದರೂ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸುವಾಗ ನಾವು "ಅವರಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಬದುಕೋಕೆ ಜಾಗ ಇರೋಲ್ಲ" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತಿಗೆ ಇದು ಸಂವಾದಿ. "ವಿವರ" ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ಬಿರುಕು, ಸೀಳು, ಹಳ್ಳ ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥಗಳೂ ಇರುವ ಕಾರಣ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಪಾಂಡವರಿಂದ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಜೀವವಾಗಿ ಭೂಮಿಯೊಳಗೆ ಅಡಗಲೂ ಎಡೆಯಾಗದು; ಸತ್ತ ಬಳಿಕ ಅವನ ಹೆಣವನ್ನು ಹೂಳಲೂ ಭೂಮಿ ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಗಳೂ ಉದ್ಭವಿಸಿ ವ್ಯಾಸವಾಣಿಯ ಗಾಂಭೀರ್ಯ ಅರಿವಾಗದಿರದು.

ನ ಚಾಸ್ಯ ಭೂಮಿರ್ವಿವರಂ ದದಾತಿ (೩.೧೧೯.೬)

ಈಚೆಗೆ ಪಾಶ್ಚಾತ್ತ್ಯಪ್ರಭಾವದಿಂದ ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದಿರುವ ಜಯೋತ್ಸಾಹಸೂಚಕವಾದ ಆಂಗಿಕಪ್ರಕಾರದಲ್ಲೊಂದು "High five." ಇದೊಂದು ಬಗೆಯ ಚಪ್ಪಾಳೆಯೇ ಹೌದು. ಇಂಥದ್ದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ವಾಡಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿತ್ತೆಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿ ಇಲ್ಲೊಂದು ಉದಾಹರಣೆ:

ಅನ್ಯೋನ್ಯಸ್ಯ ತಲಾನ್ ದದುಃ (೩.೨೨೭.೨೪)

ಸ್ನೇಹವು ಏಳು ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಏಳು ಮಾತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗುವುದೆಂಬುದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾದ ಸೂಕ್ತಿ. ಇದನ್ನು ಭಗವಾನ್ ಪಾಣಿನಿ ಕೂಡ ಸೂತ್ರೀಕರಿಸಿರುವುದು ಸ್ಮರಣೀಯ ("ಸಾಪ್ತಪದೀನಂ ಸಖ್ಯಮ್" ಅಷ್ಟಾಧ್ಯಾಯೀ, ೫.೨.೨೨). ಕಾಳಿದಾಸಾದಿಗಳೂ ಇದನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ "ಸಂಗತಂ ಮನೀಷಿಭಿಃ ಸಾಪ್ತಪದೀನಮುಚ್ಯತೇ (ಕುಮಾರಸಂಭವ, ೫.೩೯)". ಇವಕ್ಕೆಲ್ಲ ಮುನ್ನ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಇದನ್ನು ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಿರುವುದು ಮುದಾವಹ:

ಸತಾಂ ಸಪ್ತಪದಂ ಮಿತ್ರಮ್ (೩.೨೪೬.೩೫)

ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಲು ಯತ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದ ಜಯದ್ರಥನನ್ನು ಭೀಮ–ಅರ್ಜುನರು ಬಲಿ ಹಾಕುವಾಗ ಅವನ ಕುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಿಡಿದು ಎಳೆತಂದರೆಂಬ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖವಿದೆ. "ಗಲೇ ಗೃಹೀತ್ವಾ" ಎಂಬುದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟೇ ಆಗಿ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ "ಕುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಹಿಡಿದು ನೂಕುವುದು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವೂ ಉಂಟು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಭಾವವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಕಾವ್ಯಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿ ವ್ಯಂಜಿಸಲು "ಅರ್ಧಂ ಚಂದ್ರಂ ದತ್ವಾ" ಎಂಬ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು ಹುಟ್ಟಿದೆ; ಇದೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಇದೆ.

ಗಲೇ ಗೃಹೀತ್ವಾ (೩.೨೫೬.೩)

ಆಪ್ತೇಷ್ಟರನ್ನು ಬೀಳ್ಕೊಡುವಾಗ "ನಿಮ್ಮ ಹಾದಿ ಒಳಿತಾಗಲಿ" ಎಂಬಂಥ ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಡುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಣ್ಣುಡಿಯಂತೆಯೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಕಾಳಿದಾಸ, ಶ್ರೀಹರ್ಷ ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಕೂಡ ಇದನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಾರಾಂತರವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ "ಶಿವಶ್ಚ ಪಂಥಾಃ" (ಅಭಿಜ್ಞಾನಶಾಕುಂತಲ, ೪.೧೧), "ತವ ವರ್ತ್ಮನಿ ವರ್ತತಾಂ ಶಿವಮ್" (ನೈಷಧೀಯಚರಿತ, ೨.೬೨). ಇದರ ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವೆನ್ನಬಹುದು:

ಶಿವಾಸ್ತೇ ಸಂತು ಪಂಥಾನಃ (೩.೨೯೨.೧೧)

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ನಮ್ಮೆದುರು ಯಾರಿಬ್ಬರ ತಗಾದೆಯಾದಾಗ ಅವರಿಬ್ಬರಿಗೂ ಆ ಮುನ್ನ ಎಂಥ ವ್ಯವಹಾರವಿದ್ದಿತೆಂಬುದು ನಮಗೆ ಗೊತ್ತಿರದ ಕಾರಣ ಜಾರಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಮನಸ್ಸಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು "ನಿಮ್ಮೊಳಗೇನಾಯಿತೋ ನಮಗೇನು ಗೊತ್ತು?" ಎಂದು ಕೈತೊಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಇಂಥದ್ದೇ ಜಾರಿಕೆಯ ಮಾತನ್ನು ದ್ರೌಪದೀ-ಕೀಚಕರ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿರಾಟನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ:

ಪರೋಕ್ಷಂ ನಾಭಿಜಾನಾಮಿ (೪.೧೫.೨೭)

ಯಾರಾದರೂ ಹದಗೆಟ್ಟಾಗ "ಅಂಥವರು ಇಂಥವರಾದರು" ಎಂದು ವೈಸದೃಶ್ಯ ತೋರಿಸುವ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಈ ಬಗೆಯ ನಿದರ್ಶನವೊಂದು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ. ಶಲ್ಯನು ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರನಿಗೆ ನಹುಷನ ಕಥೆ ಹೇಳುವಾಗ "ಅಂಥ ಧರ್ಮಾತ್ಮನು ಶಚಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಕಣ್ಣುಹಾಕಿ ಕಾಮಾತ್ಮನಾದ" ಎಂದು ವಿಷಾದಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ:

ಧರ್ಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಸತತಂ ಭೂತ್ವಾ ಕಾಮಾತ್ಮಾ ಸಮಪದ್ಯತ (೫.೧೧.೮)

ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ "ದುಡ್ಡೇ ದುಡ್ಡೇ ದುಡಿಯುತ್ತದೆ," "ಹೆಸರೇ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ತಂದುಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಗಳುಂಟು. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು "ಕಾಲವೇ ಕಾಲವನ್ನು ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವುದು" ಎಂಬ ಅಪೂರ್ವವಾದ ಧ್ವನಿಪೂರ್ಣವಾಕ್ಯವನ್ನಾಡಿದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಕಾಲ" ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ "ಸಮಯ" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ "ಸಾವು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವೂ ಇರುವುದು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ:

ಕಾಲಃ ಕಾಲಂ ನಯಿಷ್ಯತಿ (೫.೧೨.೨೬)

ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ವನವಾಸ-ಅಜ್ಞಾತವಾಸಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಗಿಸಿದ ಬಳಿಕವೂ ಕೌರವರು ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕೊಡದೆ ಸಂಜಯನ ರಾಯಭಾರವನ್ನು ಮುಂದೂಡಿದಾಗ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನು ಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ಹೀಗೆ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ: "ಕೌರವರು ನಮ್ಮ ಸೊತ್ತನ್ನು ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸದೆ ಶಾಂತಿಸ್ಥಾಪನೆಗಾಗಿ ತಡಕಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ" ಎಂದು. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ "ಶಾಂತಿಂ ಮಾರ್ಗತಿ" ಎಂಬ ಪದಪುಂಜ ಧ್ವನಿಪೂರ್ಣವಾದ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿ:

ಅಪ್ರದಾನೇನ ರಾಜ್ಯಸ್ಯ ಶಾಂತಿಮಸ್ಮಾಸು ಮಾರ್ಗತಿ (೫.೭೦.೮)

ನಾವು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಯಾರನ್ನಾದರೂ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರು ಮಾದರಿಯಾಗಿ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿ ಅನುಕರಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಲು "ಅವರ ದಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯಿರಿ" ಎನ್ನುವುದುಂಟು. ಅರ್ಜುನನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ದಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯಲಿ ಎಂದು ಕುಂತಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸುವ ಮಾತು ಇಂಥದ್ದೇ ರೀತಿಯದು:

ದ್ರೌಪದ್ಯಾಃ ಪದವೀಂ ಚರ (೫.೮೮.೭೯)

ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನು ದೌತ್ಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಋಷಿ-ಮುನಿಗಳೊಡನೆ ಬಂದಾಗ ಕುರುಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಸ್ವಾಗತಿಸಿ ಗೌರವದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿಸಲು ಸಂಭ್ರಮದ ವಾತಾವರಣ ಮೂಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ದುಶ್ಶಾಸನನು ಪರಿಚಾರಕರಿಗೆ ಆಸನಗಳನ್ನು ತರುವಂತೆ "ಆಸನಗಳು!" ಎಂದು ಆಜ್ಞಾಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು ನಾವು ದಿನಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸದೆ ಕೇವಲ ನಾಮಪದಗಳನ್ನೇ ಪುನರುಚ್ಚರಿಸಿ ಸಂವಹಿಸುವುದರ ಸಂವಾದಿ:

ಆಸನಾನೀತ್ಯಚೋದಯತ್ (೫.೯೨.೪೪)

ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪರಾಕ್ರಮವೆಂಥದ್ದೆಂದರೆ ಯುದ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಅವನನ್ನೆದುರಿಸಿದವರು ಮನೆಗೆ ಮರಳಿದ್ದೇ ಇಲ್ಲ! ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂವಾದಿಯಾದ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಹಲವಿವೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: "ಅವನ ಬಾಯಿಗೆ ಬಿದ್ದವರು ಇವತ್ತು ಮನೇಗೆ ಹೋಗೋಲ್ಲ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ. ಸದ್ಯದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯ "ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿಮಾನ್" ಎಂಬ ಪದದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಇದೆ. ಇದು ನೆಮ್ಮದಿವಂತ, ತನ್ನಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ತಾನಿರುವವನು ಎಂಬ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯಾರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದರೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಬದುಕಲು ಬಯಕೆಯುಳ್ಳವನೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವೇ ವಿವಕ್ಷಿತ. ಅಂದರೆ, ಜೀವದ ಮೇಲೆ ಆಸೆಯುಳ್ಳವನು ಅರ್ಜುನನನ್ನು ಯುದ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಎದುರಿಸಲಾರನೆಂದು ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ.

ಯೋಽರ್ಜುನಂ ಸಮರೇ ದೃಷ್ಟ್ವಾ ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿಮಾನಾವ್ರಜೇದ್ಗೃಹಾನ್
(೫.೧೨೨.೫೦)

ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಮ್ಮ ತಾಳ್ಮೆಯನ್ನು ಪರೀಕ್ಷಿಸುವಂತೆ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವ ಯಾರನ್ನೇ ಆಗಲಿ, ಕಾತರದಿಂದ ಕೇಳುವುದುಂಟು: "ಅದೇನೋ ಒಂದು ಗಟ್ಟಿಯಾದದ್ದನ್ನ ಮೊದಲು ಹೇಳಿ," "ಮೊದ್ಲು ಪಾಯಿಂಟಿಗ್ ಬನ್ನಿ"

ಎಂದು. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿಯಾದದ್ದು ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯ ಮೊದಲಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಅಸಯಾಹಯವಾದರೂ ತಾಳ್ಮೆಗೆಟ್ಟ ಮಾತು:

ತದೇಕಂ ವದ ನಿಶ್ಚಿತ್ಯ (೬.೨೫.೨)

ನಾವು ವ್ಯವಹಾರಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ಬಾರಿ ನಡೆಯದ ಘಟನೆಗಳನ್ನು, ನಡೆಯಲಿರುವ ಘಟನೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆದೇಹೋದುವೆಂಬಂತೆ ಅಂದರೆ ಭೂತಾರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣ ಅವಧಾರಣೆಯ ತೀವ್ರತೆಯೇ. "ನಿಮಗಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಾಣ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿದ್ದೀನಿ ಅಂತಲೇ ಅಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳಿ," "ನಿಮಗೋಸ್ಕರ ಸತ್ತೇಹೋಗಿದ್ದೀನಿ" ಎಂಬಂಥ ಮಾತುಗಳೇ ವ್ಯಾಸರಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಮೂಲವನ್ನು ಕಂಡಿವೆ:

ತ್ಯಕ್ತಪ್ರಾಣಂ ಹಿ ಮಾಂ ವಿದ್ಧಿ (೬.೪೧.೮೭)

ನೂರು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನೂ ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಗಾಂಧಾರಿ ದಯನೀಯವಾಗಿ ದುಃಖಿಸುತ್ತ ಭೀಮನಿಗೆ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ: "ಅಯ್ಯೋ, ಈ ಮುದಿಕುರುಡರಿಬ್ಬರ ಪಾಲಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ಊರೆಗೋಲನ್ನೂ ನೀನು ಉಳಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲವಲ್ಲಾ!" ಎಂದು. ಈ ವಾಕ್ಯದ ಧ್ವನಿ ಅಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ. ಇಂಥ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಈಗಲೂ ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿವೆ:

ಕಥಮಂಧದ್ವಯಸ್ಯಾಸ್ಯ ಯಷ್ಟಿರೇಕಾ ನ ವರ್ಜಿತಾ (೧೧.೧೪.೨೧)

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಟ್ಟಕಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಷ್ಟೆಲ್ಲ ಭವ್ಯವಾದ ಮಹಾಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ಬರೆದ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಅದೆಷ್ಟು ತಿಳಿಹೇಳಿದರೂ ಜನರು ಧರ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲವಲ್ಲಾ ಎಂದು ಸಂಕಟಪಟ್ಟು ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತಿದು: "ಕೈಯೆತ್ತಿ ಕೂಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ; ಆದರೆ ಯಾರೂ ನನ್ನ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಕಿವಿಗೆ ಹಾಕಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ!" ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ "ಊರ್ಧ್ವಬಾಹುಃ" ಎಂಬ ಪದಪುಂಜದಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ನಿಶ್ಚಯವೂ ಲೋಕಾನುಗ್ರಹದ ಕಾತರವೂ ಪ್ರಸ್ಫುಟವಾಗಿವೆ.

ಊರ್ಧ್ವಬಾಹುರ್ವಿರೌಮ್ಯೇಷ ನ ಚ ಕಶ್ಚಿಚ್ಛೃಣೋತಿ ಮೇ (೧೮.೫.೪೯)

೨. ಅಪ್ಪಟ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು

ಮಾತಿನ ಯಾವ ಪರಿಗಳು ವಾಚ್ಯಾರ್ಥದಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಒಳಗನ್ನು ತೆರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳದೆ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯಾರ್ಥ-ವ್ಯಂಗ್ಯಾರ್ಥಗಳ ಮೂಲಕವೇ ಅಭಿಪ್ರೇತವಾಗುತ್ತವೆಯೋ ಅಂಥ ಜನಜನಿತವಾದ ಸೊಲ್ಲುಗಳನ್ನು "ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು" ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯಬಹುದು. ಇವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳು ಪ್ರಚಲಿತವಾದ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವ್ಯಾಕರಣಸೂತ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿಧೇಯವಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ ತೋರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದಲೇ ವೈಯಾಕರಣರು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳಂಥ ವಾಗ್ವಿಚ್ಛಿತ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾದ ನಿಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಗಾದೆಯ ಮಾತಿನ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಪಡೆನುಡಿಗಳ ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಇನ್ನು ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಲೌಕಿಕನ್ಯಾಯಗಳ ಛಾಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಇರಬಹುದು. ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಇವು ಆಯಾ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಗೇ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದುವು. ಆದರೆ ಭಾರತೀಯಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಅಂತರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಏಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದಾಗ ಅವೆಷ್ಟೋ ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದೊಡನೆ ಸಂವದಿಸುವುದನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು. ಅಂಥ ಕೆಲವನ್ನೀಗ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸೋಣ.

ಅಯೋದಧೌಮ್ಯರು ತಮ್ಮ ಶಿಷ್ಯರಲ್ಲೊಬ್ಬನಾದ ಉಪಮನ್ಯುವನ್ನು ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇವೆಲ್ಲ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಊಟ-ತಿಂಡಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿವೆ. ಒಂದೊಂದು ಬಾರಿಯೂ ಅವರು ನಿರ್ದಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಪದಾರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಬಳಸಬಾರದೆಂದು ನಿಯಮಿಸಿದ ಬಳಿಕ "ನೀನು ಮತ್ತಾವುದರಿಂದ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆ ಹೊರಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದೀಯೆ?" ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. "ವೃತ್ತಿ" ಎಂಬ ಪದಕ್ಕಿರುವ ಬಹ್ವರ್ಥಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯ ಪಾಡು" ಎಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಸಿದೆ.

ಕೇನ ವೃತ್ತಿಂ ಕಲ್ಪಯಸಿ (೧.೩.೪೭)

ಜರತ್ಕಾರುಮಹರ್ಷಿ ತುಂಬ ಕಠಿನವಾದ ವ್ರತಗಳನ್ನು ಆಚರಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಆತನ ವ್ರತಗಳಲ್ಲೊಂದು ಸಂಜೆಯ ಹೊತ್ತಿಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿದರೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ನೆಲೆ, ಮತ್ತದು ಊರೋ ಮನೆಯೋ ಮಠವೋ ಆಗಿರಬೇಕೆಂಬ ನಿಯಮವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಮರುಹಗಲೇ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಲ್ಲದೆ ತೆರಳಬೇಕು. ಇದನ್ನು "ಗ್ರಾಮೈಕರಾತ್ರವ್ರತ"ವೆಂದು ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಸರಿಸಿರುವುದುಂಟು. ಆದರೆ "ಯತ್ರಸಾಯಂಗೃಹ" ಎಂಬ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಸೊಗಸು ಇಲ್ಲಿಲ್ಲ.

ಚಚಾರ ಪೃಥಿವೀಂ ಕೃತ್ಸ್ನಾಂ ಯತ್ರಸಾಯಂಗೃಹೋ ಮುನಿಃ (೧.೪೧.೧)

ಜರತ್ಕಾರುವಿಗೆ ಮದುವೆ ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಸಂತತಿಯಾಗದೆ ಪಿತೃಋಣ ತೀರದು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ವಾಸುಕಿಯ ತಂಗಿಯ ಕೈಹಿಡಿದಿದ್ದ. ಅವಳ ಹೆಸರೂ

ಜರತ್ಕಾರು ಎಂದೇ. ಒಲ್ಲದ ಗಂಡನಾದ ಕಾರಣ ಅವಳಿಗೆ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಂದರೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದ. ಇಷ್ಟಾಗಿಯೂ ಅವಳು ಅವನನ್ನು ಅಸಾಧಾರಣವಾದ ರೀತಿಯಿಂದ ಓಲೈಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿದ್ದಳು. ಇಂಥ ಓಲೈಸುವಿಕೆಯನ್ನು "ಶ್ವೇತಕಾಕೀಯೋಪಾಯ" ಎಂದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಹೆಸರಿಸಿದೆ. ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಹಲವು ಧ್ವನಿಗಳಿವೆ: "ಕಾಗೆ ಕಪ್ಪಲ್ಲ, ಬಿಳಿದು" ಎಂದು ಗಂಡ ಹೇಳಿದರೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಅವನ ತೃಪ್ತಿಗಾಗಿ ಹೌದೆಂದು ಒಪ್ಪಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು, ಅಥವಾ ಬಿಳಿಯ ಕಾಗೆಯನ್ನಾದರೂ ತಂದುಕೊಟ್ಟು ಅವನನ್ನು ಸಂತೋಷಗೊಳಿಸುವುದು ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ.

ಉಪಾಯೈಃ ಶ್ವೇತಕಾಕೀಯೈಃ ಪ್ರಿಯಕಾಮಾ ಯಶಸ್ವಿನೀ (೧.೪೩.೧೦)
ಗೆಳತಿಯರಿಂದ ಬಾವಿಗೆ ತಳ್ಳಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ದೇವಯಾನಿಯನ್ನು ಯಯಾತಿ ಕೈಹಿಡಿದು ಎತ್ತಿದ ಬಳಿಕ ಅವಳು ಅವನನ್ನೇ ಮದುವೆಯಾಗಲು ಬಯಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಅವನು "ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಕನ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯ ಪರಿಣಯಿಸುವುದು ವರ್ಣಧರ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧ" ಎಂದರೆ ಇವಳು, "ಪಾಣಿಧರ್ಮದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಸರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ" ಎಂದು ಪ್ರತಿವಾದಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. "ಪಾಣಿಧರ್ಮ"ವೆಂದರೆ ಕೈಹಿಡಿದೊಡನೆಯೇ ವಿವಾಹವಾಯಿತೆಂದು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಕೈಹಿಡಿದವಳನ್ನು ಕಡೆಯ ತನಕ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.

ಪಾಣಿಧರ್ಮಃ (೧.೭೬.೨೦)
ನಾವು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಯಾವುದನ್ನಾದರೂ ನಿರ್ದುಷ್ಟವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಬೇಕಾದರೆ "ಬೆರಳಿಟ್ಟು ತೋರಿಸೋಕೆ ಕೂಡ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕುಂದಿಲ್ಲ" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಯಯಾತಿಗೆ ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆಯ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಜಿಯ ತುದಿಯಿಂದಲೂ ಸೂಚಿಸುವಂಥ ಕೊರತೆ ಕಾಣಲಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ವ್ಯಾಸರ ವರ್ಣನೆ!

ರೂಪೇ ಚ ತೇ ನ ಪಶ್ಯಾಮಿ ಸೂಚ್ಯಗ್ರಮಪಿ ನಿಂದಿತುಮ್ (೧.೭೭.೧೪)
ಪಾಂಡುವು ಸದಾ ಬೇಟೆಯಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದುದನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರು ಅವನನ್ನು "ಅರಣ್ಯನಿತ್ಯ"ನೆಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದು ಶಾಶ್ವತವಾಗಿ ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿದವನಂತೆ ವರ್ತಿಸುವವನನ್ನು ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುವ ಶಬ್ದ.

ಅರಣ್ಯನಿತ್ಯಃ ಸತತಂ ಬಭೂವ ಮೃಗಯಾಪರಃ (೧.೧೦೬.೭)
ಶಾಪಗ್ರಸ್ತನಾದ ಪಾಂಡುವಿನೊಡನೆ ಕಾಡಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿದ್ದ ಕುಂತಿ ದುರ್ವಾಸರ ಮಂತ್ರದಿಂದ ಮೂವರು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಾಗ ತನಗೆ ಸಂತಾನಭಾಗ್ಯವಿನ್ನೂ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಮಾದ್ರಿ ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತಿದು: "ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಗೆ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾದರೆಂದು ಅಸೂಯೆಯಿಲ್ಲ; ಆದರೆ ತನ್ನ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ ಸವತಿಯಾದ ಕುಂತಿಗೆ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾದರೂ ತನಗಿನ್ನೂ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂಬುದು ದುಃಖಕಾರಿ." ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ತುಲ್ಯತಾಯಾಮ್ ಅಪುತ್ರತಾ" ಎಂದರೆ "ಸಮಾನರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂತಾನಹೀನತೆ" ಉಂಟಾಯಿತೆಂದು ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ.

ತುಲ್ಯತಾಯಾಮಪುತ್ರತಾ (೧.೧೧೫.೪)
ಕುರು-ಪಾಂಡವರು ಬಾಲ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಡಿದ ಆಟಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ "ಕಾಕನಿಲೀಯನಮ್" ಕೂಡ ಒಂದು. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಆಟಗಳ ಹೆಸರುಗಳು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ಇದು ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಶಬ್ದ; ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಚಲಿತವಾಗಿರುವ ಕಣ್ಣಾಮುಚ್ಚಾಲೆಯನ್ನು ಹೋಲುವಂಥದ್ದು. "ಪಕ್ಷಿಗಳಂತೆ ಬಚ್ಚಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು" ಎಂಬುದಿದರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ. ಕಾಗೆಯು ಅಂದೂ ಇಂದೂ ಜನವಸತಿಗೆ ನಿಕಟವಾದ ಪಕ್ಷಿಯೆನಿಸಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಪರಿಚಯದ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯವೇ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ "ಕಾಕ"ಶಬ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂಲ.

ಕಾಕನಿಲೀಯನಮ್ (೧.೧೧೯.೧೬)
ಕರ್ಣನು ಅಂಗರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಒಡೆಯನಾದಾಗ ಅದನ್ನು ದೂರದಿಂದ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಅವನ ಸಾಕುತಂದೆ ಅಧಿರಥನ ವರ್ಣನೆಯ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಮುದುಕನಾದ ಅವನು ಊರೆಗೋಲನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದ ಕ್ರಮವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ತುಂಬ ಹೃದಯಸ್ಪರ್ಶಿಯಾಗಿ ಪರಿಭಾವಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅವನ ಮುಪ್ಪು ಅದೆಷ್ಟು ಆವರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆಯೆಂದರೆ ಊರೆಗೋಲೇ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಾಣವಾಗಿದೆ!

ಯಷ್ಟಿಪ್ರಾಣಃ (೧.೧೨೭.೧)
ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಹಸ್ತಿನಾವತಿಯಿಂದ ಹೊರಗೆ ಸಾಗಹಾಕುವ ಹುನ್ನಾರ ಕೌರವರದು. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕೆಲವರಿಗೆ ಲಂಚ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ವಾರಣಾವತದ ಸೊಗಸನ್ನು ಅವರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ಸಂಚುಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಹಾಗೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಲಂಚದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಣ, ಹೆಸರು, ಪದವಿ ಮುಂತಾದುವೆಲ್ಲ ಸೇರಿದ್ದವು. ಇವುಗಳ ಸಮಷ್ಟಿರೂಪವೇ "ಅರ್ಥಮಾನಯೋಜನೆ."

ಅರ್ಥಮಾನೇನ ಯೋಜಿತಾಃ (೧.೧೩೦.೮)

ಹಿಡಿಂಬನು ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನರವಾಸನೆಯನ್ನು ಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದೊಡನೆಯೇ ಅವರನ್ನು ಕೊಂದು ತರುವಂತೆ ತಂಗಿ ಹಿಡಿಂಬೆಗೆ ಆದೇಶ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗವನು ತಲೆ ಕೆರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತ ಬೆರಳನ್ನು ಮೇಲೆತ್ತಿ ಅಲ್ಲಾಡಿಸುವನು. ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಆದೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಡುವವರ ಕ್ರಮ ಹೀಗೆಯೇ ಅಲ್ಲವೇ?

ಊರ್ಧ್ವಾಂಗುಲಿಃ (೧.೧೩೯.೩)

ಭೀಮನು ಹಿಡಿಂಬನನ್ನು ಸಂಹರಿಸಿದಾಗ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಬಳಸುವ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿದು. ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಿರುವ "ದನ ಬಡಿದಹಾಗೆ ಬಡಿದು ಕೊಂದ" ಎನ್ನುವ ಮಾತಿಗಿದು ನೇರವಾದ ಸಂವಾದಿ. ವ್ಯಾಕರಣದೃಷ್ಟ್ಯಾ ಇಲ್ಲಿರುವುದು "ಣಮುಲ್"ಪ್ರತ್ಯಯದ ವಿನಿಯೋಗ. ಇದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದ ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತೃಭೂತವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಪಶುಮಾರಮಮಾರಯತ್ (೧.೧೪೨.೨೮; ೧೦.೮.೧೮)

ಪಾಂಡವರು ಏಕಚಕ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವಾಗ ಬಕಾಸುರನ ಬಾಧೆಯಿಂದ ಬಳಲಿದ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಕುಟುಂಬವನ್ನು ಕುಂತಿ ವಿಚಾರಿಸುವಾಗ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರ ಸರಳಾರ್ಥ "ದುಃಖದ ಮೂಲ ಎಲ್ಲಿಯದು?" ಎಂದು.

ಕುತೋಮೂಲಮಿದಂ ದುಃಖಮ್ (೧.೧೪೮.೧)

ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ಸ್ವಯಂವರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರೂ ಪಾಲ್ಗೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದಾಗ ಮೇಲೆದ್ದ ವಟುವೇಷಧಾರಿ ಅರ್ಜುನನನ್ನು ಹತ್ತಿರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ವಿಪ್ರವೃಂದ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸುವಾಗ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. "ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾಪಲಕ್ಕೆ" "ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರ ಚಾಪಲ್ಯ," "ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾರಿಯ ಚಾಪಲ್ಯ," "ವೇದಾಭ್ಯಾಸಜಡನ ಚಾಪಲ್ಯ" ಎಂಬೆಲ್ಲ ಧ್ವನಿಗಳಿರುವುದು ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯಕಾರಿ.

ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾಪಲಾತ್ (೧.೧೭೯.೭)

ಸುಂದ–ಉಪಸುಂದರೆಂಬ ರಕ್ಕಸರು ತಿಲೋತ್ತಮೆಗಾಗಿ ಸೆಣಸುವಾಗ ನಾನು ಮೊದಲು ತಾನು ಮೊದಲೆಂದು ಮುನ್ನುಗ್ಗಿದ ಪರಿಯನ್ನಿದು ವಿವರಿಸಿದೆ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿದು ತುಂಬ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು. "ಅಹಂಪೂರ್ವಿಕಯಾ" ಅಥವಾ "ಅಹಮಹಮಿಕಯಾ" ಎಂದು ಕೂಡ ಇದು ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಅಹಂಪೂರ್ವಮಹಂಪೂರ್ವಮಿತ್ಯನ್ಯೋನ್ಯಂ ನಿಜಘ್ನತುಃ (೧.೨೦೪.೧೮)

ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೋಮಾರಿತನಕ್ಕೆ "ದೀರ್ಘಸೂತ್ರತ್ವ" ಎಂಬ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟನ್ನು ವಿಪುಲವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಉದ್ದವಾದ ಹಗ್ಗ ಸುರುಳಿಯಾಗಲ್ಲದೆ ನೇರವಾಗಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಮತ್ತಿದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪಾಲು ಬಳಸಿ ಮಿಗುವುದರಿಂದ ವ್ಯರ್ಥವೂ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇವುಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಧ್ವನಿತವಾಗಿವೆ.

ದೀರ್ಘಸೂತ್ರತಾ (೨.೫.೬) [ದೀರ್ಘಸೂತ್ರಃ (೩.೪೯.೧೯)]

ವಿಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತಸ್ವಭಾವಕ್ಕೆ ಇದು ವಾಚಕ. ಆದರೆ ಮೂಲತಃ ಈ ಪದಪುಂಜಕ್ಕೆ "ಎಸೆಯಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಮನಸ್ಸು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವಿರುವ ಕಾರಣ ಇದೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತಚಿತ್ತತಾ (೨.೫.೬)

"ಅಪಾರವಾದ ಕಾಲ ಕಳೆದ ಬಳಿಕ" ಎಂಬ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯವುಳ್ಳ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ "ಕಾಲಪೂಗ"ವೆಂಬ ಸಮಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ನೈಘಂಟುಕವಾದ ಯಾವ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನೂ ಕೊಡಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ.

ಕಾಲಪೂಗಸ್ಯ ಮಹತಃ (೨.೩೩.೨೪)

ಭೂಲಿಂಗವೆಂಬ ಪಕ್ಷಿ ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿಯಾದ ಕೆಲಸಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಲೇ "ಮಾ ಸಾಹಸಮ್" (ಸಾಹಸ ಬೇಡ) ಎಂದು ಕೂಗುವುದಂತೆ. ಇದು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಹೇಳುವುದೊಂದು ಮಾಡುವುದೊಂದು ಆದಾಗ ಅಂಥ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಲು ಇದರ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾ ಸಾಹಸಮ್ (೨.೪೧.೨೦)

ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಪಾಂಡವರ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿಯನ್ನು ಸಹಿಸದೆ ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರನಲ್ಲಿ ದೂರಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅವನ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಪಾಂಡವರು ಅನುದಿನವೂ ವರ್ಧಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವವರು. ತಾವಾದರೋ ಬೆಳೆವಣಿಗೆ ನಿಂತುಹೋದವರು. ಮೇಲ್ನೋಟಕ್ಕೆ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳೆವಣಿಗೆಯು ದೃಢವಾಗಿದೆಯೆಂಬ

ಅರ್ಥ ಕಂಡರೂ ಅದು ನಿಂತುಹೋಗಿದೆಯೆಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಯೂ ಇರುವುದು ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯಕರ:

ಸ್ಥಿರವೃದ್ಧಯಃ (೨.೫೦.೨೮)

ಪಾಂಡವರು ವನವಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರಳಿದಾಗ ಮೊದಲ ರಾತ್ರಿ ಆಹಾರ ಸಿಕ್ಕದೆ ನೀರು ಕುಡಿದುಕೊಂಡೇ ಹಸಿವೆ ಹಿಂಗಿಸಿಕೊಂಡರೆಂದು ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಆಂತರ್ಯ. ಆದರೆ ಶಬ್ದಶಃ ಇದಕ್ಕಿರುವ ಅರ್ಥ, "ನೀರಿನೊಡನೆಯೇ ರಾತ್ರಿ ವಾಸಿಸಿದರು" ಎಂದು. ಇದು ತಾನಾಗಿ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಾರ್ಥಕವಲ್ಲ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಸೊಗಸಾದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿದೆ.

ಉದಕೇನೈವ ತಾಂ ರಾತ್ರಿಮೂಷುಃ (೩.೧.೪೦)

ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ "ರಾತ್ರಿ ಬೆಳಗಾದ ಬಳಿಕ" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ನೇರವಾದ ಸಂವಾದಿಯಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇದರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ "ಹಗಲಾಯಿತು" ಎಂದಷ್ಟೇ. ಸತಿಸಪ್ತಮಿಯ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯವೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡ ಕಾರಣ ಈ ಮಾತು ಮತ್ತೂ ಮನೋಹರವೆನಿಸಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಪ್ರಸಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದೇ ಭಾವವು ಭಂಗ್ಯತರದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಮೂಡಿದೆ: ಜಲಮಾತ್ರೇಣ ವರ್ತಯನ್ (೩.೫೮.೧೦).

ಪ್ರಭಾತಾಯಾಂ ತು ಶರ್ವರ್ಯಾಮ್ (೩.೨.೧)

ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಎದುರು ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ದುಃಖಿಸುವಾಗ ತನ್ನ ಮುಡಿ ಕೌರವರ ಕೈಗೆ ಸಿಲುಕಿತೆಂದು ಹಲಬುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಈ ಮಾತು ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಡಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ "ಅವರ ಕೈಲಿ ನನ್ನ ಜುಟ್ಟು ಸಿಕ್ಕಿತು!" ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಕಟಸಂವಾದಿ.

ಕಚಗ್ರಹಮನುಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಾ (೩.೧೩.೧೦೮)

ವೇದಘೋಷವನ್ನು ಪರ್ಯಾಯವಾಗಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಘೋಷವೆಂದೂ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಆದರೆ ಸದ್ಯದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮತ್ತೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯವಿರುವುದು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ. ಅದೆಂದರೆ, ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಂಡವರ ಜ್ಯಾಘೋಷದೊಡನೆ ಅವರನ್ನು ಹಿಂಬಾಲಿಸಿ ಬಂದ ವಿಪ್ರರ ವೇದಘೋಷವೂ ಸೇರಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮ-ಕ್ಷಾತ್ರಸಮಾಯೋಗವಾಯಿತು.

ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಘೋಷಃ (೩.೨೭.೪)

ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ "ಸೆರೆಗು ಮುಚ್ಚಿಕೊಂಡು ನಾಚಿದರು," "ಉತ್ತರೀಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ ಮರೆಸಿಕೊಂಡರು" ಎಂದೆಲ್ಲ ನಾಚಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಅದರ ನೇರ ಸಂವಾದವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು:

ವಿಲಜ್ಜಮಾನಾ ವಸ್ತ್ರಾಂತೇ (೩.೫೪.೨೬)

ವನಪರ್ವದ ಶಿಬಿಯ ಉಪಾಖ್ಯಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹದ್ದಿನ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದ ಇಂದ್ರನು ತನ್ನ ಆಹಾರವಾದ ಪಾರಿವಾಳವನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಶಿಬಿಗೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗ "ನೀನು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿನಿಯಮವನ್ನು ಮೀರಿ ಆಹಾರಪದ್ಧತ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾರ್ಪಡಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ತಿಳಿದೂ ತಿಳಿದೂ ಬಾಳೆಯ ಗಿಡವನ್ನು ಹತ್ತುವುದುಂಟೇ?" ಎಂಬ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯದ ಮಾತನ್ನೂ ಆಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ತುಂಬ ಮೃದುವೂ ಜಾರಿಕೆಯದೂ ಆದ ಬಾಳೆಯ ಗಿಡ ಮನುಷ್ಯರ ಭಾರವನ್ನೆಂದೂ ತಾಳಲಾರದು. ಹೀಗೆಯೇ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿವಿರುದ್ಧವಾದ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಉಳಿಯಲಾರದು. ನಮ್ಮ ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳ ಕಡೆ "ನುಗ್ಗೆಮರ ಹತ್ತಬಾರದು" ಎಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನಂತೆ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಈ ಮರವೂ ಬೇಗ ಮುರಿಯುವಂಥದ್ದು. ಇಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಆಶಯವೂ ವ್ಯಾಸವಾಣಿಯದೇ.

ಮಾ ರಾಜನ್ ಮಾರ್ಗಮಾಜ್ಞಾಯ ಕದಲೀಸ್ಕಂಧಮಾರುಹ (೩.೧೩೧.೧೯)

"ಅಶ್ವಬಂಧ"ವೆಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ "ಕುದುರೆಯನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟುವುದು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವಷ್ಟೇ ಇದ್ದರೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಕುದುರೆಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಕಾಸ್ತಾರನನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುವ ಧ್ವನಿಯಿದೆ.

ಅಶ್ವಬಂಧಃ (೪.೩.೨)

ಈ ಪದವು "ಹಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಎಣಿಸುವವನು" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನಷ್ಟೇ ಕೊಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರೂ ಅವುಗಳ ಯೋಗಕ್ಷೇಮವನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಗೋಪಾಲಕನನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತಿದೆ.

ಗೋಸಂಖ್ಯಾತಾ (೪.೩.೬)

ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ "ಹಾಯಾಗಿ," "ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ" ಎಂಬಿತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪದಗಳನ್ನು ಯಾವುದೇ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಬಳಸಿದರೆ, ಆ ಕೆಲಸ ಸೊಗಸಾಗಿ ಸಾಗಿತೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥ ಬರುವುದಷ್ಟೆ. ಇದೇ ತೆರನಾದುದು "ಯಥೋಪಜೋಷಂ"

ಎಂಬ ಪದಪುಂಜ. ವ್ಯಾಕರಣದೃಷ್ಟ್ಯಾ ಅವ್ಯಯೀಭಾವಸಮಾಸವಾದ ಕಾರಣ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಚೆಲುವು ಮತ್ತೂ ಮೈಗೂಡಿದೆ.

ಯಥಾಜೋಷಮ್ (೪.೫.೧೪)
ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯು ಕೀಚಕನ ಬಾಧೆಯಿಂದ ನೊಂದು ಭೀಮನಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ದುಃಖ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ, ವಿರಾಟನ ಪತ್ನಿ ಸುದೇಷ್ಣೆಯ ಪರಿಚಾರಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕಷ್ಟವನ್ನೂ ತಿಳಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ರಾಣಿಯ ಶೌಚಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ಕೂ ಅವಳೀಗ ನೆರವಾಗಬೇಕಿದೆ! "ಶೌಚದಾ" ಎಂಬ ಪದಕ್ಕೆ ಇಷ್ಟೆಲ್ಲ ಅರ್ಥಗಳು ಅದೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾದ ಕಾರಣ ಬಂದಿದೆ.

ಶೌಚದಾ (೪.೧೯.೧)
ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ "ಧೂರ್ತ" ಎಂಬ ಶಬ್ದಕ್ಕೆ "ಜೂಜುಗಾರ"ನೆಂದೂ ಅರ್ಥವಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಜೂಜಿನ ಚಟವುಳ್ಳವನಾಗಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ವಂಚನೆ ಮಾಡುವವನನ್ನು "ಅಕ್ಷಧೂರ್ತ"ನೆಂದು ಹೆಸರಿಸಿರುವುದು ಸುಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ. ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತದಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನನ್ನು ಹೀಗೆ ನಿಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ:

ಅಕ್ಷಧೂರ್ತಃ (೪.೧೯.೧)
ಯಾವುದೇ ಅನರ್ಥಕಾರಿಯಾದ ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ಅದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ "ನಾವು ಮಣ್ಣು ತಿನ್ನಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ" ಎಂದು ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದರ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ ಸಂವಾದಿಯಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ:

ಭಕ್ಷಯಿಷ್ಯಾಮ ಪಾಂಸುಕಾನ್ (೫.೨೧.೧೭)
ಪಾಂಡವ-ಕೌರವರು ಹೊಂದಿಕೊಂಡಿರಬೇಕೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಒತ್ತಿಹೇಳುವಾಗ ಈ ಮಾತು ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದೊಂದು ದೃಷ್ಟಾಂತಪ್ರಾಯವಾದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು. "ದಟ್ಟವಾದ ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೆ ಹುಲಿಗೆ ರಕ್ಷಣೆ; ಹುಲಿಯಿರುವ ಕಾರಣ ಕಾಡಿಗೆ ರಕ್ಷಣೆ." ಹೀಗೆ ಅನ್ಯೋನ್ಯರಕ್ಷಣೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವಕ್ಷಿತ.

ಮಾ ವನಂ ಛಿಂಧಿ ಸವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಂ ಮಾ ವ್ಯಾಘ್ರಾನ್ನೀನಶೋ ವನಾತ್
(೫.೨೯.೪೮)
ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದನ್ನಾದರೂ ಅದರ ಸ್ವಭಾವ ಇಂಥದ್ದೆಂದು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ "ಧರ್ಮ"ಪದವನ್ನು ಸಮಾಸದ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಬಳಸಿ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: "ಭೈಕ್ಷ್ಯಧರ್ಮಾ ಯತಯಃ" (ಯತಿಗಳು ಭಿಕ್ಷೆ ಬೇಡಿ ಬದುಕುವಂಥವರು). ಹೀಗೆಯೇ ಆಶ್ರಯವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಬದುಕಲಾರದವರು ಬಳ್ಳಿಯಂಥವರು: "ಲತಾಧರ್ಮಾಃ."

ಲತಾಧರ್ಮಾಃ (೫.೨೯.೪೯)
ಬಡವರಿಗೆ ಹಸಿವೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚೆಂಬುದು ನಾಣ್ನುಡಿ. ಗಟ್ಟಿಮುಟ್ಟಾದವರು ಕಲ್ಲನ್ನೂ ತಿಂದು ಅರಗಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆಂದು ಕೂಡ ಹೇಳುವುದುಂಟು. ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂವಾದಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಆ ಪ್ರಕಾರ "ಬಡವರ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಟ್ಟಿಗೆಯೂ ಕರಗಿಹೋಗುತ್ತದೆ!"

ದರಿದ್ರಾಣಾಂ ತು ರಾಜೇಂದ್ರ ಅಪಿ ಕಾಷ್ಠಂ ಹಿ ಜೀರ್ಯತೇ (೫.೩೪.೪೯)
"ಮೇಢ" ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ತಿರುಗಣೆಯೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವುಂಟು. ಯಾವುದೇ ತಿರುಗುವ ವಸ್ತುವಿನ ಕೇಂದ್ರವೇ ತಿರುಗಣೆ ತಾನೇ? ಹೀಗೆಯೇ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕುಟುಂಬದ, ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕೇಂದ್ರಭೂತನಾದ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು "ಮೇಢೀಭೂತ"ನೆಂಬ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಮೂಲಕ ವಿವರಿಸುವುದುಂಟು.

ಮೇಢೀಭೂತಃ ಕೌರವಾಣಾಮ್ (೫.೩೬.೫೧)
ಮಾನವರ ಮೂಲಭೂತವಾದ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯತೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವೆನಿಸಿದ ಆಹಾರ-ಮೈಥುನಗಳ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಚ್ಚರವಿರಬೇಕೆಂಬುದು ಎಲ್ಲ ವಿಜ್ಞರ ಅಭಿಮತ. ಇದನ್ನು ಹೇಳಲು ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಗಟ್ಟಿ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದ ಜಠರ-ಜನನೇಂದ್ರಿಯಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಹತೋಟಿ ಇರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೆಂಬುದು ಇವುಗಳ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ.

ಧೃತ್ಯಾ ಶಿಶ್ನೋದರಂ ರಕ್ಷೇತ್ (೫.೪೦.೨೨)
ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಮರ್ಯಾದಸ್ತರು "ನಾವು ಯಾರ ಬಾಯಿಗೂ ಬೀಳಬಾರದು" ಎಂದು ಎಚ್ಚರವಹಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕವಿವಾಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅವಾಚ್ಯಾಸ್ತು ಭವಿಷ್ಯಾಮಃ (೫.೭೦.೭೫)
ಮಂಡಿಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಮಂಡೆಯನ್ನಿರಿಸುವುದೆಂದರೆ ಗೋಳಾಟಕ್ಕೇ ಸಜ್ಜಿಕೆಯೆಂದು ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಿ. ಇದರ ತದ್ವತ್ತಾದ ಸಂವಾದವನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದು:

ಜಾನ್ವೋರ್ಮೂರ್ಧಾನಮಾಧಾಯ (೫.೭೩.೧೦)

ಸಂಧಿಗೆ ಬಂದ ಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ತಾನು ಪಾಂಡವರಿಗೆ ಸೂಜಿಯ ಮೊನೆಯಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಮಾಣದ ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನೂ ಕೊಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿಸುವ ಮಾತು ಲೋಕಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ. ಇದೇ ವಾಡಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿದೆ. "ಸೂಜಿಮೊನೆ ಊರುವಷ್ಟು ಜಾಗವನ್ನೂ ಅವರು ಬಿಡೋಲ್ಲ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ಸ್ಮರಣೀಯ.

ಸೂಚ್ಯಾಸ್ತೀಕ್ಷ್ಣಾಯಾ ವಿದ್ಯ್ಯೇದಗ್ರೇಣ (೫.೧೨೫.೨೬)

ಮೃದೂಕರಣ ಅಥವಾ ಉಜ್ಜ್ವಲೀಕರಣಗಳು ಶಿಷ್ಟಭಾಷೆಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳಲ್ಲೊಂದು. ಇವೇ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳಾಗಿಯೂ ರೂಪುಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಉದಾಹರಣೆ "ವೀರಶಯನ"ವೆಂಬ ಪದದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಯುದ್ಧರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾವೆಂದು ಇದರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ. ಮೇಲ್ನೋಟಕ್ಕೆ ಮೃದೂಕರಣದ ರೂಪ ಇದಾದರೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಧ್ವನಿಸುವ ಉದಾತ್ತತೆ-ಭವ್ಯತೆಗಳು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ.

ಲಪ್ಸ್ಯಸೇ ವೀರಶಯನಮ್ (೫.೧೨೬.೨)

ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗಂಡಸರನ್ನು ಅಪ್ರಬುದ್ಧರೆಂದೋ ಹೇಡಿಗಳೆಂದೋ ನಿಂದಿಸುವಾಗ "ಮೀಸೆ ಮೊಳೆಯದವರು" ಎಂಬ ಬೈಗುಳ ಬಳಕೆಗೆ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. "ತೂಬರಕ"ಶಬ್ದದ ಅರ್ಥವಿದೇ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ "ಕೊಂಬು ಮೊಳೆಯದ ಕರು," "ತಿಂಡಿಪೋತ" ಮುಂತಾದ ಅರ್ಥಾಂತರಗಳೂ ಉಂಟು.

ತೂಬರಕಃ (೫.೧೫೭.೧೬)

ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಕೌರವರು ಗೇಲಿಮಾಡುವಾಗ ಬಳಸಿದ ಶಬ್ದಗಳಲ್ಲಿ "ಷಂಢತಿಲ"ವೂ ಒಂದು. "ಜಳ್ಳೆಳ್ಳು" ಎಂದು ಇದನ್ನು ಭಾಷಾಂತರಿಸಬಹುದು. ಇದರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವೀರ್ಯ, ನಪುಂಸಕ ಎಂದು. ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸನು ವಿಪುಲವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸುವ "ಬಡಿಹೋರಿಗಳು" ಎಂಬ ಪದದ ಧ್ವನ್ಯರ್ಥವೂ ಇದೇ.

ಷಂಢತಿಲಾಃ (೫.೧೫೮.೩೧)

"ಬ್ರುವ" ಎಂಬ ಶಬ್ದವನ್ನು ಯಾವುದೇ ನಾಮಪದದ ಕೊನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಸೆದು ಬಳಸಿದಾಗ ಅದು ನಿಂದಾರ್ಥಕವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ಆ ಸಮಾಸದ ಪೂರ್ವಪದದ ಗುಣಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರದೆ ಕೇವಲ ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ತಳೆದಂಥದ್ದೆಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಯನ್ನೂ ಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ. "ಮುನಿಬ್ರುವ," "ಪಂಡಿತಬ್ರುವ," "ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯಬ್ರುವ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಯಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳಿವೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದರ ಮೊದಮೊದಲ ವಿನಿಯೋಗವನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದು.

ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಬ್ರುವಃ (೫.೧೭೮.೩೫)

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಶಿಷ್ಟಸಮಾಜವು ಬೈಗುಳುನ್ನಾಗಲಿ, ಅಶ್ಲೀಲಶಬ್ದಗಳನ್ನಾಗಲಿ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವಿಸುವಾಗ "ಹೇಳಬಾರದ ಮಾತುಗಳು" ಎಂದು ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಅವು ಎಂಥವೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. "ಅನ್ನಬಾರದ್ದನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಅಂದರು," "ಆಡಬಾರದ್ದನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಆಡಿದರು" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ಸುವಿದಿತ. ಇವುಗಳ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ ಸಂವಾದಿಯೇ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ "ಅವಾಚ್ಯವಚನ"ವೆಂದು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ. ಇದರ ಮೂಲವನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು:

ಅವಾಚ್ಯವಾದಃ (೬.೨೪.೩೬)

ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನು ತಾಮಸಾಹಾರವನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ, ಅದು "ಹಳಸಲು ಮತ್ತು ಒಣಕಲು / ರುಚಿಗೆಟ್ಟದ್ದು" ಎಂದು ವಿವರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಚೋಯುಕ್ತಿಗಳೇ ಆಗಿ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸಿವೆ. ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಆ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯ ಮಂಕಾಗಿಲ್ಲ.

ಯಾತಯಾಮಂ ಗತರಸಮ್ (೬.೩೯.೧೦)

ತಾಮಸಗುಣದ ವ್ರತ-ತಪಸ್ಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸುತ್ತ ಕೃಷ್ಣನು, ಅವು "ಮೊಂಡುತನದ ಹಠ"ದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದವೆನ್ನುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು ಕೂಡ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟೇ ಆಗಿ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸಿದೆ.

ಮೂಢಗ್ರಾಹಃ (೬.೩೯.೧೯)

ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಸಮರದಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮನ್ನು ತೊಡಗಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ವೀರಯೋಧರು "ಮುಯ್ಯಿಗೆ ಮುಯ್ಯಿ ತೀರಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೆ" ಸೆಣಸಿದರೆಂದು ವ್ಯಾಸರು ವರ್ಣಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇದು ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿರುವ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಸಂವಾದಿ. "ಏಟಿಗೆ ಇದಿರೇಟು," "ಸೇರಿಗೆ ಸವಾಸೇರು" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ಸ್ಮರಣೀಯ.

ಕೃತಪ್ರತಿಕೃತೈಷಿಣೌ (೬.೪೩.೨೫)

ಬೇರೆಯವರ ಮಾತು–ಕೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವೂ ಬಿಡುವು ಕೊಡದೆ ಏಕಮುಖವಾಗಿ ವರ್ತಿಸುವುದನ್ನು ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯಾಗಿ ಹಳಿಯುವುದುಂಟು. ಇದು ಆಧುನಿಕಭಂಗಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬೆಳೆದಿದೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: "ಸೈಡು ಕೊಡ್ದೆ ಮಾತಾಡ್ತಾನೆ." ಇದೇ ತೆರನಾದ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ "ಅಪದಾಂತರಮ್" ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು ಒಳಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಶ್ಲೇಷಶಕ್ತಿಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಇದು ಏಕಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ "ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಯಿಡಲೂ ತೆರಪಿಲ್ಲದೆ," "ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಾತಿಗೂ ಬಿಡುವಿಲ್ಲದೆ" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಳೆಯಿಸುವುದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯ.

ಅಪದಾಂತರಮ್ (೭.೧೬.೩೮)

ಅರ್ಜುನನು ಬಾಣಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸುವಾಗ ಅವು ಶತ್ರುಸೇನೆಯ ಜೀವವನ್ನೇ ತಿನ್ನುತ್ತಿದ್ದವೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥದ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು "ಪ್ರಾಣಭೋಜನ." ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಣವೆಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ಗಾಳಿ ಎಂದಿರುವ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಅರ್ಥವೂ ಸಂಗತ. ಉಸಿರನ್ನು ತಿನ್ನುವುದೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವೂ ಪ್ರಾಣಹರಣದ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಆಯಾಮ ತಾನೆ?

ಪ್ರಾಣಭೋಜನಃ (೭.೨೬.೨೬)

ದ್ರೋಣಪರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಮನು ಕೌರವಸಹೋದರರನ್ನು ಸದೆಬಡಿಯುವುದನ್ನು ಸಂಜಯನು ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರನಿಗೆ ವರ್ಣಿಸುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗ ಜೂಜಾಟದ ಹೊತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನಾದಿಗಳು ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನೂ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನೂ ಗೇಲಿಮಾಡಿದ್ದನ್ನು ನೆನೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. "ನಿನ್ನ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ದಾಸಿಯನ್ನು ಭೋಗಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಹಾಗೆ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಯಸಿದರು" ಎಂದೂ ತಿವಿಯುವನು. ಈ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ "ದಾಸೀಭೋಗೇನ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾಂ" ಎಂಬ ವಾಕ್ಯಭಾಗವು ತನ್ನಂತೆಯೇ ಒಂದು ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಪ್ರಯೋಗ. "ದಾಸಿಯರೊಡನೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಭೋಗಿಸುವರೋ ಹಾಗೆ ಭೋಗಿಸುವರು" ಎಂಬ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ಇಲ್ಲುಂಟು.

ದಾಸೀಭೋಗೇನ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾಂ ಚ ಭೋಕ್ತುಕಾಮಾಃ (೭.೧೦೭.೧೪)

ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಬಾಕತನಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಶಬ್ದಗಳಿವೆ: "ಆದ್ಯೂನ," "ಘಸ್ಮರ," "ಉದರಂಭರಿ," "ಕುಕ್ಷಿಂಭರಿ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ. ಅದೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ಸೇರುವಂಥದ್ದು "ಔದರಿಕ"ಶಬ್ದ. ಉದರವೆಂಬ ಪದಕ್ಕೆ ವೃದ್ಧಿಭಾವವನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿದಾಗ ಔದರಿಕ ಎಂಬ ಶಬ್ದವು ಸಿದ್ಧಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಂದರೆ, "ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದವನು" ಎಂಬ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ಮಾರ್ಮಿಕವಾಗಿ ಹೊಟ್ಟೆಬಾಕನನ್ನು ಹೆಸರಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ.

ಔದರಿಕಃ (೭.೧೧೪.೬೯)

ಪರಿಪೂರ್ಣವಸ್ತುವು ಹದಿನಾರು ಭಾಗಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿಕೊಂಡದ್ದೆಂಬ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ ವೇದಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದಿಂದಲೂ ಪ್ರಚುರ. ಇದು ವಸ್ತುತಃ ಚಂದ್ರನ ಹದಿನಾರು ಕಲೆಗಳ ಸಮಾಹಾರವಾದ ಪೂರ್ಣಿಮೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿ ಮೊದಲು ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿತು. ಅವೆಷ್ಟೋ ವೈದಿಕಶಬ್ದಗಳು ಆಕಾಶಕಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಿವೆ, ಅಭಿಜಾತಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿವೆಯೆಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ ಇದೂ ಒಂದು ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ "ಕಲಾ" ಎಂಬುದಕ್ಕೆ "ಹದಿನಾರನೆಯ ಒಂದು ಭಾಗ" ಎಂಬ ಅರ್ಥವೂ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ. ಯಾರನ್ನಾಗಲಿ, ಯಾವುದನ್ನಾಗಲಿ ಮತ್ತೊಂದರೊಡನೆ ಹೋಲಿಸಿ ಕೀಳ್ಗರೆಯುವಾಗ ಅದು "ಕಲಾಮಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೂ ಬಾಳುವಂಥದ್ದಲ್ಲ" ಅರ್ಥಾತ್, "ಹದಿನಾರನೆಯ ಒಂದು ಭಾಗದಷ್ಟೂ ಅಲ್ಲ" ಎನ್ನುವುದುಂಟು. ದೇಶಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂವಾದಿಯಾದ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳಿವೆ.

"ನಿನಗೊಂದು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವೂ ಹೋಲಿಕೆಗೆ ನಿಲ್ಲೋಲ್ಲ," "ಅದರ ಕಾಲುಭಾಗದಷ್ಟೂ ಇದು ಬಾಳೋಲ್ಲ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ.

ಯಃ ಕಲಾಂ ಷೋಡಶೀಂ ತ್ವತ್ತೋ ನಾರ್ಹತೇ ತಂ ಪ್ರಶಂಸಸಿ
(೭.೧೬೮.೧೬)

ಮೊದಲಿನಿಂದಲೂ "ಉಪ್ಪಿನ ಋಣ," "ಅನ್ನದ ಋಣ," "ಜೋಳದ ಪಾಳಿ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಯಾಗಿ ಸೇವಕರು ತಮ್ಮ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಧಮರ್ಣ್ಯವನ್ನು ತೋರುವ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳು ಬೆಳೆದುಬಂದಿವೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವು "ಭರ್ತೃಪಿಂಡ"ವೆಂದು ಹೆಸರಿಸಿದೆ. ಕೌಟಿಲ್ಯ, ಭಾಸ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನಲೇಖಕರು ಈ ವಾಚೋಯುಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಭರ್ತೃಪಿಂಡಮ್ (೯.೧೧.೪೪)

ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನು ವೈಶಂಪಾಯನಸರೋವರದಿಂದ ಎದ್ದುಬಂದ ಕೌರವನಿಗೆ "ನೀನು ನಮ್ಮೊಡನೆ ಯಾರನ್ನಾದರೂ ಆರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಯುದ್ಧಮಾಡು; ಗೆದ್ದರೆ ರಾಜ್ಯ ನಿನ್ನದೇ" ಎಂದಾಗ ಇವನ ಅವಿವೇಕಕ್ಕೆ ಕೆರಳಿದ ಕೃಷ್ಣ "ಇದೇನು, ಮತ್ತೆ ಜೂಜಾಟವನ್ನಿಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲುಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡೆಯಲ್ಲಾ!" ಎಂದು ಹಳಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ "ತದಿದಂ" ಎಂಬ ಮಾತೇ ತನ್ನಂತೆ ಒಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟು. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ, ಜೂಜಿಗಿಂತ ಮಿಗಿಲಾದ ಅನಿಶ್ಚಿತಕ್ರೀಡೆ ಮತ್ತೊಂದಿಲ್ಲ; ಇಂಥ ಅನಿಶ್ಚಯವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೆ ನಮಗೆಲ್ಲ ತಂದೊಡ್ಡಿದೆಯಲ್ಲಾ ಎಂಬ ಇಂಗಿತದಿಂದ ಹೊರಟ "ದ್ಯೂತಮಾರಬ್ಧಂ" ಎಂಬ ಮಾತು ಏಕಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನ ಹಳೆಯ ಚಟವನ್ನೂ ಅದರಿಂದಾದ ಅನರ್ಥವನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಸಂದಿಗ್ಧದೊಡನೆ ಧ್ವನಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಮಾರ್ಮಿಕ.

ತದಿದಂ ದ್ಯೂತಮಾರಬ್ಧಂ ಪುನರೇವ ಯಥಾ ಪುರಾ (೯.೩೨.೭)

ನಾಳೆಗೆಂದು ಏನನ್ನೂ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳದೆ ಬಾಳುವ ಅಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಗಳೂ ಅಪರಿಗ್ರಹಿಗಳೂ ಆದ ವ್ರತಿಷ್ಠರನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಲು ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಲವು ಪದಗಳುಂಟು. ಅವೆಲ್ಲ ಬಗೆಬಗೆಯ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳೇ ಸರಿ. ಅಂಥದ್ದೊಂದು ಇಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಅಶ್ವಸ್ತನಮ್ (೧೨.೮.೧೨)

ವಿವೇಕವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಕುರುಡಾಗಿ ವೇದಾಭ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡಿದರೂ ಅದು ನಿಷ್ಪ್ರಯೋಜಕವೆಂಬುದು ಆರ್ಷಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಅರಿವು. ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ಬಾರಿ "ವೇದಾಭ್ಯಾಸಜಡ," "ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯಜಡ," "ಶುಷ್ಕಶ್ರೋತ್ರಿಯ" ಎಂದೆಲ್ಲ ಇಂಥವರನ್ನು ಹಳಿದಿರುವುದುಂಟು. ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರ ಬಲುಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಈ ವರ್ಗದವನೇ. ಅದನ್ನು ಭೀಮ "ನಿನ್ನದು ವೇದಾಭ್ಯಾಸದಿಂದ ಹದಗೆಟ್ಟ ಬುದ್ಧಿ" ಎಂದು ಎತ್ತಿ ತಿವಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಅನುವಾಕಹತಾ ಬುದ್ಧಿಃ (೧೨.೧೦.೧)

ಹಾಲುಕರೆಯುವ ಹಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಕರೆಯುವ ಪಾತ್ರೆಯ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಕ್ಕನುಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಹೆಸರಿಸಿ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಿಸುವುದು ಹಿಂದೆ ವಾಡಿಕೆಯಾಗಿತ್ತು. ದ್ರೋಣವೆಂದರೆ ಈ ಕಾಲದ "ಬಕೆಟ್" ಎನ್ನಬಹುದು. ಅಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಮಾಣದ ಹಾಲನ್ನು ಕರೆಯುವ ಹಸುವೇ "ದ್ರೋಣದುಘಾ." ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ "ಕುಂಡದುಘಾ," "ಕಲಶದುಘಾ" ಎಂದೆಲ್ಲ ಪದಗಳಿವೆ.

ದ್ರೋಣದುಘಾ (೧೨.೨೯.೫೨)

ಮೊದಲೇ ಹೇಳಿದಂತೆ, ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ "ಣಮುಲ್"ಪ್ರತ್ಯಯ ಅವೆಷ್ಟೋ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಜಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. "ಮಧುದೋಹಂ ದುಹೇತ್" (ಜೇನನ್ನು ಹೀರುವಂತೆ ಹೀರಬೇಕು) ಇಂಥ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಯೋಗ. ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನಿಗೆ ರಾಜನೀತಿಯನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸುವಾಗ, ದುಂಬಿ ಹೂಗಳಿಂದ ಮಕರಂದವನ್ನು ಹೀರುವಂತೆ ಪ್ರಜೆಗಳಿಂದ ಕರವನ್ನು ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕಿವಿಮಾತು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಮಧುದೋಹಮ್ ದುಹೇತ್ (೧೨.೮೯.೪)

ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ ತಡವಾಗಿ ಏಳುವವರನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಗೇಲಿಯ ಮಾತುಗಳಿರುತ್ತವೆ. ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಥವರನ್ನು "ಸೂರ್ಯವಂಶಿ"ಗಳೆಂದು ತಿವಿಯುವುದುಂಟು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಅಂಥವರನ್ನು "ಹಗಲೇ ರಾತ್ರಿಯಾದವರು" ಎಂದು ಹಳಿದಿದೆ.

ಪ್ರಗೇನಿಶಃ (೧೨.೨೨೧.೩೬)

ತಾವು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕರೆಂಬ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನರತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಬೂಟಾಟಿಕೆಯ ಜನರನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಗಳೂ ನಿಂದಿಸಿವೆ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಥವರನ್ನು "ಧರ್ಮಧ್ವಜ"ರೆನ್ನಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮನ್ವಾದಿಸ್ಮೃತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿದು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧಪದ. ಹೇಗೆ ಬಾವುಟವು ಅಂಗೈಯಗಲದ ನೆಲದಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ಕಂಬವನ್ನು ಊರಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರೂ ಬಾನಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾರಾಡಿ ಹತ್ತು ಗಾವುದಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಕಾಣುವಂತೆ ಮೆರೆಯುವುದೋ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಬೂಟಾಟಿಕೆಯ ಜನರಿಗೆ ನೆಲೆ ಕಡಮೆ, ಬೆಲೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ತೆವಲು ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಪಾರ! ಡಿ.ವಿ.ಜಿ.ಯವರು ಈ ಪದಪ್ರಯೋಗವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು "ದೇಶಧ್ವಜಿ" ಎಂಬ ಹೊಸ ಶಬ್ದವನ್ನು ಸೃಜಿಸಿರುವುದಿಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಮರಣೀಯ.

ಧರ್ಮಧ್ವಜಃ (೧೨.೩೦೮.೪)

೩. ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಸಮಾಸಗಳು

ಭಾರತೀಯಭಾಷೆಗಳ ಬಲಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಒಂದು ಸಮಾಸಗುಂಫನಶಕ್ತಿ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಕ್ಕಿದು ಸರ್ವೋಚ್ಚವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ನುಡಿಗೆ ಹೊಸತೊಂದು ಕಸುವನ್ನು ನೀಡುವುದಲ್ಲದೆ ಅಂದ-ಅಡಕಗಳನ್ನೂ ತರಬಹುದು. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ರೂಪಕನಿರ್ಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಮಾಸವೇ ಸರ್ವಸಮರ್ಥ. ಲೋಕಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾದ ದ್ವಂದ್ವ, ತತ್ಪುರುಷ, ಬಹುವ್ರೀಹಿ, ಕರ್ಮಧಾರಯಗಳಂಥ ಸಮಾಸಗಳಲ್ಲದೆ ಪ್ರಾದಿ, ನಞ್, ಅಲುಕ್, ಉಪಪದ, ಅವ್ಯಯೀಭಾವಗಳಂಥ ಸಮಾಸಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳಿಗೆ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳಾಗುವ ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಕೆಲವು ಮಾದರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸೋಣ.

ಗರುಡನ ಅಮೃತಹರಣದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವಾಗ ಅವನ ತಾಯಿ ವಿನತೆ ಸಮುದ್ರತೀರದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಹರಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ತೀರದಿಂದ ಬೀಸುವ ಗಾಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಯ್ದಾಡುವ ಕಡಲ ಅಲೆಗಳ ವರ್ಣನೆಯಿದೆ. ವ್ಯಾಸರು ದಡದಿಂದ ಬೀಸುವ ಗಾಳಿ ಅಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಉಯ್ಯಾಲೆಯಾಡಿಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥ ಬರುವಂತೆ "ವೇಲಾದೋಲಾನಿಲಚಲ" ಎಂಬ ಸಮಾಸವನ್ನು ಹೆಣೆದಿರುವುದು ಸ್ಪೃಹಣೀಯ.

ವೇಲಾದೋಲಾನಿಲಚಲಂ ಕ್ಷೋಭೋದ್ವೇಗಸಮುತ್ಥಿತಮ್ (೧.೧೯.೯)

ತಪಸ್ವಿಗಳು ಶಾಪಾಯುಧರು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಅವರನ್ನು ಅಪಮಾನಿಸಬಾರದು. ಅವರನ್ನು "ವಾಗ್ವಿಷ"ರೆಂದು (ನಂಜಿನ ಮಾತಿನವರು) ಕರೆಯುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಹೊಸತೊಂದು ಶಬ್ದವನ್ನೇ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಸೃಜಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ನ ಚಾವಮಾನ್ಯಾ ದರ್ಪಾತ್ತೇ ವಾಗ್ವಿಷಾ ಭೃಶಕೋಪನಾಃ (೧.೨೭.೩೨)

ವಿರುದ್ಧಾರ್ಥಕಪದಗಳನ್ನು ಒಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಬೆಸೆದಾಗ ಹುಟ್ಟುವ ಪದದ ಸೊಗಸು ಅನೂಹ್ಯ. ಇಂಥ ಶಬ್ದಗಳ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ ಅವಶ್ಯ. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಾಚೀನನಿದರ್ಶನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ರಮ್ಯವೂ ದಾರುಣವೂ ಆದದ್ದು "ರಮ್ಯದಾರುಣ;" ಸಿಹಿ-ಕಹಿಗಳ ಸಮ್ಮಿಶ್ರಪಾಕ. ಸಮಾಸಭೇದಾನುಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಇಂಥ ರೂಪಗಳ ಅರ್ಥಚ್ಛಾಯೆಗಳು ಸಂಧ್ಯಾಕಾಲದ ಆಗಸದಂತೆ ಬಣ್ಣಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲೀಲೆಯಿಂದ ಬದಲಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಗಮನಿಸುವುದಾದರೆ, "ರಮ್ಯವೇ ದಾರುಣ"ವೆಂಬ ಅರ್ಥಾಂತರ ಸ್ಫುರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಸಮಾಸಗಳನ್ನು ಹೆಣೆಯುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕುವೆಂಪು ಅವರು ಅಸಮಾನರು. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: ಅವರ "ರುದ್ರರಮಣೀಯ," "ಸಂಸ್ಕಾರಸರ್ಪ," "ಅಗ್ನಿತೀರ್ಥ," "ಅಗ್ನಿನಗ್ನತೆ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ನೂರಾರು ಪದಗಳು ಸ್ಮರಣೀಯ. ಅವರಿಗೆ ಈ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಫೂರ್ತಿಯಾದವರು ಬಾಣಭಟ್ಟ, ಅಲ್ಲಮಪ್ರಭು ಮತ್ತು ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸರಂಥವರು.

ರಮ್ಯದಾರುಣಃ (೧.೪೩.೨೦) [ಮುಹೂರ್ತೇ ರಮ್ಯದಾರುಣೇ (೫.೧೦.೩೩)]

ಸ್ವಾಗತವೆಂಬ ಶಬ್ದದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ "ಸು" ಎಂಬ ಉಪಸರ್ಗವಿದೆ (ಸು+ಆಗತ). ಅಚ್ಚಗನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ, ನಲ್ಬರವು. ಆದರೆ ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಹೇಗೋ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು "ಸು" ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡಿತು. ವೈಯಾಕರಣರು ಇದೊಂದು ಅಪಶಬ್ದವೆಂದು ಅದೆಷ್ಟು ಕೋಲಾಹಲಿಸಿದರೂ ರೂಢಿಯು ಅದನ್ನು ಕಿವುಡುಗೇಳಿತು. ವ್ಯಾಸರಂಥ ಮಹಾಕವಿಗಳೇ "ಸುಸ್ವಾಗತ"ಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವಾಗತವಿತ್ತ ಬಳಿಕ ಮತ್ತೇನು ಮಾಡುವುದು?

ಸುಸ್ವಾಗತಮ್ (೧.೭೧.೧೯)

ಹುಟ್ಟುಗುರುಡನಾದ ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರನನ್ನು ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಪಾಪ "ತಿಳಿವನ್ನೇ ಕಣ್ಣಾಗಿ ಉಳ್ಳವನು" ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯುವ ಮೂಲಕ "ನಯೋಕ್ತಿ"ಗೆ (Euphemism) ಮಣೆಹಾಕಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇಂದೂ ಈ ಪದ ಹೀಗೆಯೇ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾಚಕ್ಷುಃ (೧.೧೧೭.೧೩)

ದೇವತೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಆಹುತಿ ನೀಡುವಾಗ "ಸ್ವಾಹಾ" ಎನ್ನುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಪಿತೃಗಳ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ "ಸ್ವಧಾ" ಎಂಬ ಅವ್ಯಯ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇಂಥ ಆಹುತಿಯನ್ನೇ ಅಮೃತಾಹಾರವಾಗಿ ಉಳ್ಳವರು ಪಿತೃದೇವತೆಗಳೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಲು ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಟಂಕಿಸಿದ ಸಮಾಸ "ಸ್ವಧಾಮೃತ."

ಸ್ವಧಾಮೃತಮ್ (೧.೧೧೯.೧)

ಬರಿಗಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಯಥಾರ್ಥ ಗೋಚರಿಸದೆ ಹೋಗಬಹುದು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ತರ್ಕಶುದ್ಧವಾದ ಬುದ್ಧಿಯಿಂದ ನಮ್ಮ ನೋಟವನ್ನು ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು. ಹೀಗೆ ವಿಚಾರದಿಂದ ಪುಷ್ಟವಾದ ಕಾಣ್ಕೆಯೇ "ತರ್ಕಚಕ್ಷುಸ್."

ತಮಹಂ ಫಲಾರ್ಥಿನಂ ಮನ್ಯೇ ಭ್ರಾತರಂ ತರ್ಕಚಕ್ಷುಷಾ (೧.೧೫೫.೧೯)

ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿಗಳ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಈಗಿನಿದಲ್ಲ; ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೂ ಮೊದಲಿನದು! ಆದರೆ ಆ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿಗಳು ದುರ್ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿಗಳಾಗಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ, ಸದ್ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿಗಳಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರನ್ನು ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿಗಳೆಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ:

ಬುದ್ಧಿಜೀವಿನಃ (೧.೧೭೯.೩)

"ಉಪಪದಸಮಾಸ"ದ ಮೂಲಕ ನಿಷ್ಪನ್ನವಾಗುವ ಶಬ್ದಗಳು ಅವೆಷ್ಟೋ ಕ್ರಿಯಾವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ಗರ್ಭೀಕರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಮೈದಾಳುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ಕಾರಣ ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಬರುವ ಅಡಕವೂ ತನ್ಮೂಲಕ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ವಾಚೋಯುಕ್ತಿತ್ವವೂ ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ. ಅಂಥ ಕೆಲವು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿವೆ: ಕಿಂಕರಾಃ (೨.೪೩.೬) (ಸೇವಕ), ಕಿಂದಾನಮ್ (೩.೮೧.೬೫) (ದೇಯವಸ್ತುವು ಯಾವುದು?), ಕಿಂಜಪ್ಯಮ್ (೩.೮೧.೬೫) (ಯಾವುದನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಜಪಿಸಬೇಕು?), ಕಿಂದತ್ತಮ್ (೩.೮೧.೮೩) (ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಯಾವುದು?) ಇವುಗಳ ವಿಗ್ರಹವಾಕ್ಯವೇ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಹಾಸು-ಹೊಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಬಿಡಿಸಿಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: "ಕಿಂಚಿತ್ ಕರೋತೀತಿ" ಅಥವಾ "ಕಿಂ ಕರೋಮೀತಿ ಯೋ ಬ್ರೂತೇ ಸಃ" ಎಂಬುವು ಕಿಂಕರಶಬ್ದದ ವಿಗ್ರಹವಾಕ್ಯಗಳು. ಏನನ್ನಾದರೂ ಮಾಡುವವನು, ನಾನೇನು ಮಾಡಲಿ ಎಂದು ಮುಂದಾಗುವವನೇ ಕಿಂಕರ. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಮಿಕ್ಕ ಪದಗಳೂ ಊಹನೀಯ.

ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ತಂದೆ ಮತ್ತು ತಾಯಂದಿರಿಬ್ಬರ ಮೂಲಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಹೆಸರಿಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಈ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಲಿಂಗವೈಷಮ್ಯದ ದೋಷವಿಲ್ಲ. "ಕುಂತಿಯು ಯಾರಿಗೆ ತಾಯಿಯೋ ಅವನು ಕುಂತೀಮಾತಃ" "ಕುಂತೀ ಮಾತಾ ಯಸ್ಯ ಸಃ." ಇದು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಬಲ್ಲಂತೆ ಬಹುವ್ರೀಹಿಸಮಾಸ. ಇದು ತನ್ನಂತೆಯೇ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿರುವುದು ಲೋಕಾದರಣೆಯ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ. ಇಂಥ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನಕವಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ತತ್ಪೂರ್ವದ ವೇದ-ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಪ್ರಚುರ.

ಕುಂತೀಮಾತಃ (೩.೧೭೭.೨)

ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ "ಒಂದೇ ಸರತಿ," "ಒಂದೇ ಏಟಿಗೆ," "ಒಂದೇ ಉಸುರಿನಲ್ಲಿ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗಳಿವೆ. ಇವೆಲ್ಲ ಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ತ್ವರೆ-ತೀವ್ರತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಇಂಥ ಒಂದು ಪದ "ಏಕಪದಮ್." ಇದು "ಒಂದೇ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ" ಮತ್ತು "ಒಂದೇ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಯಲ್ಲಿ" ಎಂಬ ವಾಚಿಕ-ಕಾಯಿಕರೂಪದ ಅರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಧ್ವನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಏಕಪದಮ್ (೩.೨೯೭.೪೮)

"ಉದರ್ಕ"ಶಬ್ದವು ಉದಯಸೂರ್ಯವಾಚಿ. ಲಕ್ಷಣಾವೃತ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಇದು ಅಭ್ಯುದಯವನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಉತ್ತರಪದವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಉಳ್ಳ ಸಮಾಸವು ಆಯಾ ಪೂರ್ವಪದದ ಏಳಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟೆಂಬಂತೆ ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. "ಸುಖೋದರ್ಕ," "ಶುಭೋದರ್ಕ," "ಫಲೋದರ್ಕ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ರೂಪಗಳು ಅಸಂಖ್ಯೇಯ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಒಳಿತಿನ ಅಭ್ಯುದಯಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುವ ಈ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಪಾಪದ ಉನ್ನತಿಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳಲು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ವ್ಯಾಸರ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ.

ಪಾಪೋದರ್ಕಮ್ (೫.೩೨.೧೩)

[**ಶತೋದರ್ಕಮ್** (೫.೮೯.೧೨) ಎಂಬ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಪ್ರಯೋಗವೂ ಇದೇ ತೆರನಾದದ್ದು].

ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಆವರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಬುದ್ಧಿಯುಳ್ಳವನು "ಕಾಲಪರೀತಬುದ್ಧಿಃ" ಎಂಬುದು ಬಹುವ್ರೀಹಿಸಮಾಸದ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಸುವ ಅರ್ಥವಾದರೂ "ಕಾಲ"ಪದಕ್ಕಿರುವ ಶ್ಲೇಷ ಮತ್ತದು ಹುಟ್ಟಿಸುವ ಧ್ವನಿಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ "ಸಮಯದ ಸುಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಲುಕಿದ ಬುದ್ಧಿಯುಳ್ಳವನು" ಹಾಗೂ "ಸಾವಿನ ದವಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವವನು" ಎಂಬ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಅರ್ಥಗಳಿಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗತವಾಗುತ್ತವೆ.

ಕಾಲಪರೀತಬುದ್ಧಿಃ (೫.೬೧.೭)

ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಮಾಗಿದ ವಸ್ತು "ಕಾಲಪಕ್ವ"ವೆಂಬುದು ಅಭಿಧಾರ್ಥವಾದರೂ "ಮೃತ್ಯುವಿನ ತುತ್ತಾಗುವ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವವರು" ಎಂಬ ಧ್ವನ್ಯರ್ಥ ಈ ಸಮಸ್ತಪದದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ದೌತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಧಿಕ್ಕರಿಸಿ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಸಭಾತ್ಯಾಗ ಮಾಡಿದಾಗ, ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಕೌರವರೂ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯರ ನಾಶ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವೆಂದು ಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿಸುವಾಗ ಈ ಶಬ್ದದ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಕುಯ್ಲಿಗೆ ಸಿದ್ಧವಾದ ಬೆಳೆಗೆ ಈ ಪದವನ್ನು ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುವುದುಂಟು. ಆದರೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲನ ಕುಯ್ಲಿಗೆ ಕೌರವರು ಸಜ್ಜಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆಂಬ ಮಾರ್ಮಿಕಧ್ವನಿಯಿದೆ.

ಕಾಲಪಕ್ವಮ್ (೫.೧೨೬.೩೧)

ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಸೆಣಸುವಾಗ ನಿರ್ವಿರಾಮವಾಗಿ ಬಾಣಗಳನ್ನು ಬಿಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೂಡುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಸೆಳೆಯಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಬಿಲ್ಲು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಬಾಗಿ ವರ್ತುಲಾಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಂತೆ ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದನ್ನೊಂದು ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಹೇಳುವಾಗ "ಎಂದೂ ಬಾಗಿದ ಬಿಲ್ಲುಳ್ಳವನು," "ಆಕರ್ಣಾಂತವಾಗಿ ಹೆದೆಯನ್ನೆಳೆದು ಬಾಣ ಹೂಡಿದವನು," "ಅಪ್ರತಿಮನಾದ ಬಿಲ್ಗಾರ" ಎಂಬೆಲ್ಲ ಧ್ವನಿಗಳು ಹೊರಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಈ ಉಕ್ತಿವೈಚಿತ್ರ್ಯ ಮುಂದೆ ಎಷ್ಟೋ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಕವಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಉಪಾದೇಯವಾಯಿತು. "ಚಕ್ರೀಕೃತಚಾರುಚಾಪ" (ಕುಮಾರಸಂಭವ, ೩.೭೦), "ಕುಂಡಲೀಕೃತಧನು" (ಪ್ರಾಣಾಭರಣ, ೫೩) ಮುಂತಾದ ಕಾಳಿದಾಸ-ಜಗನ್ನಾಥಾದಿಗಳ ಮಾತುಗಳೇ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ.

ನಿತ್ಯಂ ಮಂಡಲಕಾರ್ಮುಕಃ (೬.೪೫.೬೦)

ಕೃಪಾಚಾರ್ಯನು ಕರ್ಣನನ್ನು ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸುವಾಗ, "ನಿನ್ನದೆಲ್ಲ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಗೋಳಾಟ" ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಲ್ಲದ ಸಂಕಟವನ್ನು ಊಹಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹಲಬುವುದಿಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವಕ್ಷಿತ. "ಮನೋರಥಪ್ರಲಾಪ" ಎಂಬ ಈ ಪದಪುಂಜದಲ್ಲಿ ಮನೋರಥ ಎನ್ನುವಾಗಲೇ ರೂಪಕವೊಂದರ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯುಂಟು. ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನೇ ರಥವನ್ನಾಗಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಎಲ್ಲೆಡೆ ದಾಪಿಡುವ ಚಿತ್ರವಿಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಫುರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಉದ್ವಿಗ್ನವಾದ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನ ಹಲಬುವಿಕೆ ಈ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟಿನ ಇಂಗಿತ.

ಮನೋರಥಪ್ರಲಾಪಃ (೭.೧೩೩.೩೨)

ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ರಾಜನೀತಿಯನ್ನು ಉಪದೇಶಿಸುವಾಗ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯಚ್ಯುತನೂ ಪ್ರಜಾಪೀಡಕನೂ ಆದ ರಾಜ ದೊರೆಯೇ ಅಲ್ಲ, ಅವನೊಬ್ಬ ರಾಜವೇಷದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕಳ್ಳನೆಂಬ ಮಾತನ್ನಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗ ಬಳಕೆಯಾದ "ಪಾರ್ಥಿವತಸ್ಕರ" ಎಂಬ ಶಬ್ದ ಕರ್ಮಧಾರಯಸಮಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಉಭಯಪದಪ್ರಧಾನವಾದ ಈ ಸಮಾಸದ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ರಾಜನು ಕಳ್ಳನಂತಲ್ಲ, ಕಳ್ಳನ ವೇಷವನ್ನೂ ಧರಿಸಿದವನಲ್ಲ, ಅವನು ಕಳ್ಳನೇ ಹೌದೆಂಬ ಅಭೇದಭಾವ ಸ್ಫುರಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಭ್ರಷ್ಟರಾಜನ ಪತನದ ತೀವ್ರತೆಯೂ ಮನಮುಟ್ಟುತ್ತದೆ.

ಪಾರ್ಥಿವತಸ್ಕರಃ (೧೨.೧೩೭.೯೬)

೪. ವಿನೂತನ ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳು

ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳು ಯಾವುದೇ ನಾಮಪದಗಳಿಗಾಗಲಿ, ಕ್ರಿಯಾಪದಗಳಿಗಾಗಲಿ ಸಂದರ್ಭೋಚಿತವಾದ ಪರಿಪುಷ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ತುಂಬಿಕೊಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಇವು ಸಮಸ್ತವಾಗಿಯೂ ಅಸಮಸ್ತವಾಗಿಯೂ ಬರಬಹುದು. ಇಂಥ ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ನಾವೀಗ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸೋಣ.

ಇತಿಹಾಸಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಉತ್ತಮವೆನಿಸಿದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ವ್ಯಾಸಂಗದಿಂದ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಕಾವ್ಯಕೌಶಲವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುವರೆಂದು ವ್ಯಾಸರೇ ಈ ಕೃತಿಯ ಆದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವಾಗ ಬಳಕೆಯಾದ "ಕವಿಬುದ್ಧಯಃ" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣ ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ.

ಇತಿಹಾಸೋತ್ತಮಾದಸ್ಮಾಜ್ಜಾಯಂತೇ ಕವಿಬುದ್ಧಯಃ (೧.೨.೨೩೭)

ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದೇ ಜಾತಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ ವಸ್ತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತರ–ತಮಗಳನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶದಿಂದ ಸುಖವೀಯುವ ವಸ್ತು–ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಸಂತಾನವೇ ಮಿಗಿಲೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸುವಾಗ "ಸ್ಪರ್ಶವತಾಂ" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣ ಮನೋಗ್ರಾಹಿ. ಜೀವಸ್ಪರ್ಶವೇ ನಮಗೆ ಸೌಖ್ಯದಾಯಕ. ಇಂತಿರುವಲ್ಲಿ ನಮ್ಮದೇ ರಕ್ತವನ್ನು ಹಂಚಿಕೊಂಡು, ನಮ್ಮದೇ ಆಶೋತ್ತರಗಳ ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಯಾಗಿ ಜನಿಸಿದ ಮಗುವಿನ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶ ಅದೆಷ್ಟು ಹಿತವೆನಿಸಬೇಡ? ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ಯಾವುದೇ ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಕೋಮಲತನುವಿನ ಅಪ್ಪುಗೆ ಯಾರಿಗೂ ಮಧುರಾನುಭವವೆಂಬ ತಥ್ಯ ಕೂಡ ಇಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಪುತ್ರಃ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶವತಾಂ ವರಃ (೧.೬೮.೫೬)

ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾತರ–ಉದ್ವೇಗಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಗಾದಾಗ ಗುರು–ಲಘುಗಳ ವಿವೇಕವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಎಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಪದಾಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ಲುತವನ್ನು ಬಳಸುವುದು ಪರಿಪಾಟಿ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: "ನೀನದನ್ನು ಹಾಳುಮಾಡು " ಎಂಬ ಕೋಪೋಕ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇದನ್ನೇ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು. ಇಂಥ ವಾಗ್ರೂಪವು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಬಂದಿರುವುದು ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯಕರ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಸ್ವರೇಣ" ಎಂಬ ಪದಕ್ಕೆ "ಪ್ಲುತೇನ" ಎಂದು ವಿಶೇಷಣವನ್ನು ಹಾಕಿರುವುದು ನಾಟಕೀಕರಣವನ್ನು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಪೋಷಿಸುವಂತಿದೆ.

ಧ್ವಂಸೇತ್ಯುಚ್ಚೈಸ್ತ್ರಿಃ ಪ್ಲುತೇನ ಸ್ವರೇಣ (೧.೮೪.೧೮)

ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಪ್ರಣಯಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಬಿಂಬಿಸುವಾಗ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರಿಗೆ ವಿರಳವೂ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕವೂ ಆದ ವಸ್ತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸುವುದು ದೃಶ್ಯ–ಶ್ರವ್ಯಕಾವ್ಯಗಳ ನಿರ್ಮಾತೃಗಳಿಗೆ ಇಷ್ಟದ ಕೆಲಸ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ರಸಿಕರ ಒತ್ತಾಸೆಯೂ ಬಹಳಷ್ಟೆನ್ನಿ. ಇಂಥ ಸಂದರ್ಭವನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು "ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಂಬರಧರಾಮ್" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣದ ಮೂಲಕ ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿರುವುದು ರೋಚಕ.

ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾಂಬರಧರಾಮೇಕಾಂ ಪದ್ಮೋದರಸಮಪ್ರಭಾಮ್ (೧.೯೨.೨೭)

ಗೋಳಾಡುವವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಸಂಕಟದ ಎಲ್ಲೆ ಮೀರಿದಾಗ ನೆಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿದ್ದು ಹೊರಳಾಡಿ ಮಂಡಿಯೂರಿ, ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಘಟ್ಟಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು, ಕೈಕಾಲುಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ನೆಲಕ್ಕುಜ್ಜುತ್ತ ಹಲುಬುವುದು ಈಗಲೂ ದೃಷ್ಟಚರ. ಇಂಥ ಸಂದರ್ಭವನ್ನು "ಘೃಷ್ಟಜಾನುಶಿರೋ ಕ್ಷಿಕಾನ್" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣದಿಂದ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ನಮ್ಮ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಚಕರ್ಷ ಕ್ರೋಶತೋ ಭೂಮೌ ಘೃಷ್ಟಜಾನುಶಿರೋಽಕ್ಷಿಕಾನ್ (೧.೧೧೯.೧೮)

ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳು ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ವಿಶೇಷ್ಯಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧಪದಗಳೆಂಬಂತೆ ತೋರಿದರೂ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಉತ್ಕರ್ಷವನ್ನೇ ತುಂಬುತ್ತವೆ. ತಾರುಣ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನಿಗೆ ಅವನ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾವಂತಿಕೆಯ ಕಾರಣ "ವೃದ್ಧಶೀಲಿ" (ಹಿರಿಯರ ವರ್ತನೆಯನ್ನು ಮೈಗೂಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡವನು) ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣವಿತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಹೃದಯಂಗಮ.

ತರುಣಂ ವೃದ್ಧಶೀಲಿನಮ್ (೧.೧೨೯.೭)

ಭೀಮಸೇನನಿಗೆ "ವೃಕೋದರ" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣವೂ ಅನ್ವರ್ಥನಾಮ! ಇಂಥವನು ವೇಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಗಾಳಿಯಂತೆಂದು ವರ್ಣಿತವಾಗುವುದು ಅವನ ವಾಯುಪುತ್ರತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ಯುಕ್ತವೂ ಹೌದು. ಇವೆರಡನ್ನೂ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಒಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಹೀಗೆ ಸಾಧಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ:

ವಾತರಂಹಾ ವೃಕೋದರಃ (೧.೧೩೬.೧೯)

ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ಬಾರಿ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಘಟನೆಗಳು ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಿಂದ ಒಡಮೂಡುತ್ತವೆ; ಹಿರಿದಾದುದು ಕಿರಿದೊಂದರಿಂದ ಹುಟ್ಟುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಹೀಗೆ ಹರಳುಗಟ್ಟಿಸಿದೆ:

ಲಘುಮೂಲಾನ್ಮಹೋದಯಾನ್ (೨.೫.೨೦)

ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಅದೆಷ್ಟೋ ಬಾರಿ ಅನೇಕವಸ್ತುಗಳ ಮೂಲವನ್ನೂ ಫಲವನ್ನೂ ನಿರುಪಮವಾದ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ವಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ: ಹಣದ ಪರಮಪ್ರಯೋಜನವೇ ತಾನುಂಡು ಮತ್ತಿತರರನ್ನೂ ತಣಿಸುವುದು. ಇದನ್ನು ಧನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶೇಷಣವಾಗಿ "ದತ್ತಭುಕ್ತಫಲಂ" ಎಂದು ಕಲ್ಪಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರುಹಿದ ಪರಿ ಅವಿಸ್ಮಾರ್ಯ.

ದತ್ತಭುಕ್ತಫಲಂ ಧನಮ್ (೨.೫.೧೦೧)

ಇದೇ ಜಾಡಿಗೆ ಬರುವಂಥದ್ದು ವಿದ್ಯೆಯ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಸದಾಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿದೆಯೆಂದು ಹೇಳುವ "ಶೀಲವೃತ್ತಫಲಂ" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣ.

ಶೀಲವೃತ್ತಫಲಂ ಶ್ರುತಮ್ (೨.೫.೧೦೧)

ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಧುವಾಚಕಶಬ್ದಗಳು ಸಮೃದ್ಧವಾಗಿವೆ. ಈ ತಥ್ಯ ಅದರ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನತೆಯನ್ನಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಆ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯು ಮೈಗೂಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಬಂಧುಪ್ರೀತಿಯನ್ನೂ ಧ್ವನಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹಿರಿಯ ಹೆಂಡತಿಗೆ "ಜ್ಯೇಷ್ಠಿನೀ" ಎಂಬ ಅಭಿಧಾನವಿದೆ. ಅವಳ ಮಗನೇ "ಜ್ಯೈಷ್ಠಿನೇಯ." ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ಅಸೂಯಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಿಗೆ ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ ಸಮಾಧಾನ ಹೇಳುತ್ತ, "ನೀನು ನನ್ನ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆಲ್ಲ ಹಿರಿಯನಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲ, ಕುರುವಂಶದ ಹಿರಿಯ ಸೊಸೆಯ ಹಿರಿಯ ಮಗ ಕೂಡ" ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ "ಜ್ಯೇಷ್ಠ"ಶಬ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾರ್ಥಕವಾಗಿ "ಜ್ಯೈಷ್ಠಿನೇಯ"ಪದವು ವಿಶೇಷಣವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಜ್ಯೇಷ್ಠೋ ಜ್ಯೈಷ್ಠಿನೇಯಃ (೨.೫೦.೧)

ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಸ್ವಭಾವವನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭವೊಂದರಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಅವನು ಸ್ವಭಾವದಿಂದಲೇ ನಿರ್ದಯನೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿರುವುದು ಮಾರ್ಮಿಕವಾದ ವಿಮರ್ಶೆ. "ಪ್ರಕೃತಿನಿರ್ಘೃಣ" ಎಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣ ಇದನ್ನು ಅನ್ಯಾದೃಶವಾಗಿ ಸಾಧಿಸಿದೆ.

ದುರ್ಯೋಧನಃ ... ಪ್ರಕೃತಿನಿರ್ಘೃಣಃ (೩.೧.೧೪)

ತಮ್ಮ ನಾಯಕರನ್ನೂ ಮತ್ತಿತರ ಸಜ್ಜನರನ್ನೂ ವ್ಯಾಸ–ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿಗಳು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ "ಅಕ್ಲಿಷ್ಟಕರ್ಮ"ರೆಂದು ಅವರನ್ನು ವಿಶೇಷಿಸುವುದೊಂದು ಅಪ್ಯಾಯನವಾದ ಪರಿಪಾಟಿ. ಕಷ್ಟವೆಂದು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವೂ ತೋರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳದೆ ನಿಯತವಾದ ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವುದು ತನ್ನಂತೆಯೇ ಒಂದು ಮಹಾಗುಣ.

ಅಕ್ಲಿಷ್ಟಕರ್ಮಣಾಂ (೩.೨.೧)

ತ್ರಿಗುಣಗಳು ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಪ್ರಭಾವಿಸುವುದು ಅನುಭವವೇದ್ಯ, ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ. ರಜೋಗುಣದಿಂದ ರೂಷಿತವಾದ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ ವ್ಯಾಸರು "ರಜೋಮೂಢ"ವೆಂಬ ವಿಶೇಷಣವನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ "ಮೂಢ"ವೆಂಬ ಕೃದಂತ ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ಅರ್ಥವು ತಮೋಗುಣದ ಪರಿಣಾಮವನ್ನೂ ಧ್ವನಿಸುತ್ತದೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಬಲ್ಲವರಿಗೆ ಈ ವಿಶೇಷಣ ಮತ್ತೂ ಹೃದಯಹಾರಿ.

ರಜೋಮೂಢೇನ ಮನಸಾ (೩.೩೨.೧೪)

ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರನು ಅಜ್ಞಾತವಾಸದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ತನ್ನ ಹಳೆಯ ಚಟವನ್ನು ಬಿಡಲಿಲ್ಲ; ಅಷ್ಟೇಕೆ, ಅದನ್ನೇ ಬಾಳಿನ ಬಂಡವಾಳವಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡ! ಪುಣ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ವನವಾಸದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗ ರಾಜರ್ಷಿ ಬೃಹದಶ್ವನಿಂದ ಅಕ್ಷವಿದ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಕಲಿತ ಕಾರಣ ಸೋಲಿನ ಪಾಳಿ ಅವನದಾಗಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸುವಾಗ ಕಂಕನೆಂಬ ಹೆಸರಿನ ಅವನಿಗೆ "ಮತಾಕ್ಷಃ" ಮತ್ತು "ಪ್ರಿಯದೇವಿತಾ" ಎಂಬ ಎರಡು ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳನ್ನು ಕವಿಬ್ರಹ್ಮರು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮೊದಲನೆಯದಕ್ಕೆ "ಅವನಿಚ್ಛಿಸಿದ ಗರವನ್ನು ದಾಳಗಳು ಬೀಳಿಸುತ್ತವೆ" ಎಂದು ಅರ್ಥವಾದರೆ, ಎರಡನೆಯದಕ್ಕೆ "ಜೂಜೇ ಜೀವವಾದವನು" ಎಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಯುಂಟು.

ಕಂಕೋ ನಾಮ ದ್ವಿಜೋ ಭೂತ್ವಾ ಮತಾಕ್ಷಃ ಪ್ರಿಯದೇವಿತಾ (೪.೧.೨೦)

ಲೋಕರೂಢಿಯಲ್ಲಿ "ದಿಕ್ಕು ತೋಚದೆ" ಎಂಬ ವಾಗ್ರೂಢಿಯುಂಟು. ಇದನ್ನು ವ್ಯಾಸರ ವಾಣಿ "ಕಾಂದಿಗ್ಭೂತಃ" (ದಿಕ್ಕು ತೋಚದವನು) ಎಂದು ವಿಶೇಷಣೀಕರಿಸಿದೆ.

ಕಾಂದಿಗ್ಭೂತಮ್ (೫.೪೭.೫೬)

೫. ಉಪಚಾರವಕ್ರತೆ

ಕಾಶ್ಮೀರದ ಆಲಂಕಾರಿಕರ ಪೈಕಿ ಎದ್ದುತೋರುವ ಕುಂತಕನು ತನ್ನ

"ವಕ್ರೋಕ್ತಿಜೀವಿತ" ಗ್ರಂಥದಲ್ಲಿ "ಉಪಚಾರವಕ್ರತಾ" ಎಂಬ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಯೊಂದನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಒಂದರ ಗುಣಗಳನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಂದರಲ್ಲಿ ಆರೋಪಿಸಿದಾಗ ಅದೊಂದು ಬಗೆಯ ಚೆಲುವು ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದು ವಸ್ತುತಃ ಲಕ್ಷಣಾವೃತ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಜನಿಸುವ ವಕ್ರತೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಅಚೇತನದಲ್ಲಿ ಚೇತನತ್ವವನ್ನು ಆರೋಪಿಸಿದಾಗ ಉಪಚಾರವಕ್ರತೆಯ ಸೊಗಸು ಎದ್ದುಕಾಣುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದು ಮಹಾಕವಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಬೇಗ ಒದಗಿಬರುವ ಸಮರ್ಥಸಾಧನ.

ರೋಮಾಂಚನವೆಂಬ ಸಾತ್ತ್ವಿಕವಿಕ್ರಿಯೆಯನ್ನು "ಮೈಗೂದಲು ಹರ್ಷಿಸಿತು" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವಾಗ ಹರ್ಷದಂಥ ಮಾನವಸ್ವಭಾವವನ್ನು ಕೂದಲಿಗೆ ಆರೋಪಿಸಿದ ಸೊಗಸಿದೆ.

ಸಂಪ್ರಹೃಷ್ಟತನೂರುಹಃ (೧.೯೪.೮೯)

ವೀರಯೋಧರು ಪರಸ್ಪರ ಮೂದಲಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ ಮಾತು ಸಾಕೆನಿಸಿ ಬಾಣಗಳಿಂದಲೇ ಮಾತನಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳೋಣವೆಂದು ನಿಶ್ಚಯಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಚಿತ್ರಣವಿಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಬಾಣಗಳಂಥ ಜಡವಸ್ತುಗಳಿಂದ ಮಾತನಾಡಿಸುವ ಲಕ್ಷಣಾವ್ಯಾಪಾರವೇ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಆಕರ್ಷಣೆ.

ಶರೈಃ ಕಥಯ ಭಾರತ (೧.೧೨೬.೨೦)

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಸಿರಿಯನ್ನು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯೆಂದೇ ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಸಂಪತ್ತಿ ಶಾಶ್ವತವಲ್ಲವೆಂಬುದು ವಿವೇಕಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ಬಲ್ಲ ಸತ್ಯ. ಇದನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೂ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಚ್ಚಗನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ, "ಸಿರಿವೆಣ್ಣು ಸೂಳೆಯಂತೆ." ಆದರೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಚ್ಯತಾದೋಷ ಬಂದ ಕಾರಣ ಗ್ರಾಮ್ಯತ್ವ ತಲೆದೋರಿದೆ. ಅದನ್ನು "ಸಾಧಾರಣಾ" ಎಂಬ ನಯೋಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಮೀರುವ ಪರಿ ಮನೋಹರ. "ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯು ಸಾಧಾರಣೆ" ಎಂಬ ಅವರ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ "ಸಿರಿಯು ಬೆಲೆವೆಣ್ಣಿನಂತೆ" ಎಂಬ ಒಂದೇ ಅರ್ಥವಲ್ಲದೆ "ಸಂಪತ್ತಿ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಬಂದು ಸೇರುವ ನಿರ್ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ವಸ್ತು" ಎಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಯೂ ಉಂಟು.

ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಃ ಸಾಧಾರಣಾ ವಿಭೋ (೨.೪೬.೨೦)

ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ "ಅವರು ದುಡ್ಡನ್ನ ತಲೆ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೊತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ," "ಇವರು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನ ತಲೆ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೊತ್ತುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ನುಡಿಗಟ್ಟುಗಳುಂಟು. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಬರುವ ಮಾತು "ನೀತಿಯು ತಲೆಯ ಮೇಲೇರಿದೆ." ಸಜ್ಜನರೆಲ್ಲ ಈ ಭಾರವನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮದಾಗಿ ಹೊತ್ತವರೆಂಬುದು ವ್ಯಾಸರ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯ.

ಏಷ ಭಾರಃ ಸತ್ತ್ವವತಾಂ ನಯಃ ಶಿರಸಿ ಧಿಷ್ಠಿತಃ (೨.೫೦.೨೫)

ಧರ್ಮರಾಜ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಪಣವಿಟ್ಟು ಸೋತಾಗ ಭೀಮನು ಸಂಕಟಪಡುತ್ತ ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತು: "ನಮ್ಮ ಬೆಳಕಿಂದು ಗಾಸಿಗೊಂಡಿತು." ಮಡದಿ ಮನೆಯ ದೀಪವೆಂದು ಅವನು ಆ ಮೊದಲೇ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದ. ಇಂಥ ಮನೆಯ ದೀಪಕ್ಕೆ ಚಂಡಮಾರುತದ ಆಘಾತವಾಯಿತೆಂಬುದು ಅವನ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳಕಿನಂಥ ಅಮೂರ್ತವಸ್ತುವಿಗೆ ನೋವಾಯಿತೆಂಬ ಉಪಚಾರದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ ವಾಗ್ವಕ್ರತೆಯ ಪರಾಕಾಷ್ಠೆ.

ತನ್ನೋ ಜ್ಯೋತಿರಭಿಹತಮ್ (೨.೬೪.೭)

ಸಂಪದಕ್ಕೆ ಏಳು ಬಗೆಯ ಪೂರಕಸಾಮಗ್ರಿ ಸಮಿತ್ತಾಗುವುದೆಂಬ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ವಾಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪತ್ಸಂಪಾದನೆಯೂ ಒಂದು ಯಜ್ಞವೆಂಬ ಧ್ವನಿಯಿದೆ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ಸಿರಿಯಂಥ ಜಡವಸ್ತುವಿಗೆ ಪೂರಕವಾಗುವ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿಗಳು ಸಮಿತ್ತುಗಳ ಹಾಗೆಂಬ ಆರೋಪಣೆಯೂ ಚೆಲುವನ್ನು ತುಂಬಿದೆ.

ಸಪ್ತೈತಾಃ ಸಮಿಧಃ ಶ್ರಿಯಃ (೫.೩೮.೩೫)

ಹೀಗೆ ವಟವೃಕ್ಷದಂತೆ ಶಾಖೋಪಶಾಖೆಯಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ವಾಗ್ವಿಲಾಸ ಅಪಾರ, ಅನನ್ಯ. ಇದರ ಒಂದು ಏಕದೇಶೀಯಪರಿಚಯವೇ ಈ ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತಲೇಖನ. ❑

Mahabharata in the Oral Tradition:

—Dr. C.N. Ramachandran

This paper begins with the assumption that oral Mahabharatas are independent and not counter narratives; and argues that these narratives, born in a social system and a mythical world different from those of *The Mahabharata,* imaginatively record the history, belief-systems, local rituals and world-view of the tribe to which they belong. The argument is based on the study of four different oral Bharata-narratives: *Bhil Bharath* (tr. Hindi), *Janapada Bharatada Kathegalu, Janapada Mahabharata* and *Gamokkalu Mahabharata* (all three in Kannada).

Independent Narratives

Abstract: This paper begins with the assumption that oral Mahabharatas are independent and not counter narratives; and argues that these narratives, born in a social system and a mythical world different from those of *The Mahabharata,* imaginatively record the history, belief-systems, local rituals and world-view of the tribe to which they belong. The argument is based on the study of four different oral Bharata-narratives: *Bhil Bharath* (tr. Hindi), *Janapada Bharatada Kathegalu, Janapada Mahabharata* and *Gamokkalu Mahabharata* (all three in Kannada).

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According to the consensus among scholars, during the fourth and third centuries before the Christian era, a popular narrative called 'Jaya,' consisting of 20,000 couplets in Sanskrit based on the oral tales prevalent then, was composed by a great sage-poet called Vyasa; and this narrative grew in course of time through additions and elaborations by other poets to become 'Bharatha' and still later, probably in the 'Puranik period, to become *The Mahabharaha* that we have today, consisting of one hundred thousand shlokas. Vyasa's narrative is a compendium of different stories and incidents, philosophical treatises, and descriptions of varied rituals and practices. In her essay, "The Historian and the Epic," Romila Thapar argues that there are at least two different traditions incorporated into what is called 'Vyasa Bharatha' and explains the two traditions thus:

> One was the earlier, narrative layer reciting a series of stories based on bardic material. The other consisted of a number of didactic sections relating to the *raja-dharma, moksha dharma,* and the practices of different sections of society, which drew ostensibly on the *dharmashastra* literature and which were interpolated into the epic at later periods. The rationale for these interpretations would be that with the conversion of the epic into sacred literature, it was necessary that it also incorporates discussions on ethical norms and the definitions of authority both temporal and sacred. [1]

From time to time, owing to the socio-political changes in the Indian society and consequent changes in the literary-religious discourses, the *Vyasa Bharatha* was re-told and re-re-told in various Indian languages. These include such literary works like *Vikramarjuna Vijaya* and *Karnata Bharatha Kathamanjari* (in Kannada), *Villi Bharatha* (in Tamil), *Andhra Bharatha* (in Telugu), etc.

How do we view these retellings of the classical epics? Are they different versions of ancient and hoary 'original' works, or, are they revisions, revaluations, and subversions of the 'original' works? And, in this confluence of literary re-tellings, where do we place the oral versions?

In this paper, I have limited myself to a consideration of four oral Bharatha-narratives, *Bhil Bharath* and three Kannada *Bharathas.* In the first part of this paper, I have introduced these oral narratives, focusing on their divergences from their literary cousins. In the second part, there is an attempt to relate these divergences to the socio-cultural discourses of the communities which have given birth to these oral narratives.

1) Bhilonka Bharath:[2]

This narrative belongs to the oral traditions of a tribal community, called Bhil, living in the Banaskanth district of northern Gujarat. In the Bhil language 'Bharath' means 'war.`' The *Bhil Bharath* contains 27 parts, composed partly in prose and partly in verse. To the Bhil community, this narrative is integral to their seasonal public- rituals. The ritualistic presentation of the narrative is rather elaborate. The principal singer called *Bhopo* and his associates called *Raagiya* conduct a communal worship, in the beginning of which the *Bhopo* spreads on the sanctified ground a square piece of red cloth; and then he arranges rice grains on the cloth to form varied pictures. These pictures on the red cloth symbolize the Sun and the Moon and also the major characters of the narrative; and thus, symbolically they create a new world inhabited by the Bharath-characters. Then, the *Bhopo* lights the small lamps placed on the four corners of the red cloth and prays for the welfare of the whole community. Normally, everyone present in the audience also participates in this prayer. Afterwards, the *Bhopo* begins his performance.

Generally, the entire narrative is not presented in any one performance and the parts that are chosen on a particular occasion are decided by the special nature of the occasion and the particular season. For instance, during the *'Hooro'* festival, conducted to commemorate those who gave up their lives wreaking vengeance against the enemy, such parts as 'Karna-Pandav,' 'Draupadi-Vasuki,' and 'Eko Danav' are sung; during funeral rites, such parts as 'Shankhoddhar Yagnya' and 'Kuvara Sona' are presented. The parts to be presented depend on the seasons also: 'Bhajan vaartaa' ('vaartaa' means story) during autumn, 'kaabariyaani koli' during winter, and 'nava aamiyaano geeto' during spring.[3]

(This narrative in 27 parts (or '*adhyaay*') is so different from the Bharathas in the literary tradition that a brief synopsis of the entire narrative is given in the notes.[4)] The major differences from *Vyasa Bharatha* are as follows:

1) **Incidents:** (a) By the blessings of the seven sages, five Pandavas to Kunti and 28 Kauravas to Gandhari are born; (b) Draupadi of unknown parentage is found in a jungle and brought home and married by the Pandavas; (c) Vasuki, the king of serpents in the netherworld, sees a hair of Draupadi, falls in love with her, reaches her palace, and forces himself on her in front of Arjuna; she turns to Karna for help and is saved by him; (d) At the time of Subhadra's marriage with Arjuna, the demon Eko enters her womb; later he is born to her as her son. (d) Bored with her life in heaven, Indrani, the wife of Indra, comes down to earth, and wishes to marry a brave human being; Abhimanyu accepts her and defeats Indra who challenges him for a fight; etc.

2) **Characters:** Among characters, the most striking difference is the characterization of Draupadi. To start with, she of unknown parentage is found in a jungle wandering by the Pandavas; they bring her home and marry her. Later, following Draupadi in her nocturnal movements, once Bhima comes to

know that she is actually a demon in the form of a woman and that she has cast her spell on all her husbands except Dharmaraya. Krishna is neither a god nor the Geethacharya of Vyasa. He has secret hatred towards his nephews – Abhimanyu and Ghatotkacha. He connives many ruses so that Abhimanyu's marriage with Uttara is not consummated; and during the war with the Kauravas, he intentionally gets his nephews killed. In order to demonstrate that women have fleeting nature, Krishna comes out of Radha's house, enters it again as a bangle-seller, and seduces her successfully.

To supplement these differences, the long narrative does not have Khandavavanadahana, Gitopadesha, and the Kurukshetra war except the fight and death of Abhimanyu.

(1) *Gamokkalu Mahabharatha:*[5]

'Gamokkalu' is the name of a tribe that lives in villages, in the northern part of Karnataka (Kumata-Honnavara). Also known as 'Gramavasi' and 'Patagara,' they are the devotees of Tirupati Venkataramana; and at present their occupation is agriculture. A few of the striking differences from the classical text are as follows:

After Dharmaraya loses everything he possesses in the game of dice, Draupadi invites Duryodhana to play a game with her and gradually wins back everything lost by her husband. But, Dharmaraya doesn't accept the success of a woman and goes to the forest with Draupadi. Abhimanyu, before leaving for war, wishes to meet his wife once; but Krishna holds him back on the way. Without meeting his wife, Abhimanyu goes to war and dies as planned by his maternal uncle Krishna.

Karna in this narrative is a very virtuous man and a strong follower of Dharma. He advises Draupadi secretly how to save herself when she is dragged into the court of Duryodhana. (What is surprising is that all the details about Abhimanyu and Karna in this narrative are very similar to those of *Bhil Bharath.* However, these two tribes, Bhils and Gamokkalu, have no contact with each other even today; and the languages they speak are also completely different.)

One special point of this narrative, not found in any other, is that it talks about a Jain Basadi; Arjuna's beloved Kusumali (Chitrangada in the written tradition) becomes a Jain monk at the end.

(3) Janapada Bharatha Kathegalu: (Folk-tales of the Bharatha)[6]

The singers of this narrative belong to the Gauda, Jogi, and Kunabi tribes living in the northern part of Karnataka. They sing these songs that narrate the various parts of the Bharatha-story independently during the harvest season and festivals. The main function of these performances appears to be entertainment. The 27 parts are sung by different individuals. (Full synopsis is given in the Notes)[7]

The striking differences are:
a) After the death of Pandu, his sons begin to eat parts of his dead body as part of an old practice; but Krishna comes there and advises them not to do so. B) After Dharmaraya loses everything in the game of dice, Draupadi takes his place and through cunning wins back all that her husband had lost; Krishna tries to kill the foetus in Subhadra's womb, but doesn't succeed; etc. There is no Khandavavanadahana, no Gitopadesha, and no prolonged Kurukshetra war except for Abhimanyu's death.

4) *Janapada Mahabharatha:*[8]

This narrative, as long as 36,000 lines, is popular among the agricultural communities of Karnataka and chosen parts of it are performed during festivals and on special occasions. Since the singer has been exposed to the traditional Mahabharatha- story through films, plays, and Television, his narrative closely follows the literary Bharatha-versions. However, there are many significant variations, of which the major ones are the following:

a) **Characters:** At the level of characters, those of Draupadi, Krishna's nephews, and Vichitravirya stand out as totally different from those found in the literary versions of the Bharatha-story.

In this narrative, Draupadi is the incarnation of the goddess 'Adi Shakti'; after Dharmaraya loses everything, she takes his place in the game of dice and wins back everything. Even the final victory in the Kurukshetra war becomes possible only due to her powers. Krishna has three nephews: the sons of Subhadra, Hidimbaa, and Urisingi; and Krishna considers all of them his enemies and contrives to get them killed in the Kurukshetra war. Vichitravirya suspects his own mother's behaviour with Bhishma; later repents, and commits suicide jumping into fire.

b) **Incidents:** The test in 'Draupadi swayamvar' is not shooting the fish (*'matsya bhedan'*) but shooting down an iron crow that used to trouble Draupadi's father. (The same incident occurs in '*Gonda Ramayana'* also.)[9] At the end of the narrative, the Pandavas attempt to cross a huge and swollen river called 'Seela' and cannot climb the Himalayas to reach Heavan.

II

Admittedly, there has always been mutual influence between the oral and the written traditions; each has borrowed from the other. Still, there are significant divergences between the oral and written Bharatha-narratives due to their value-systems and world-views.

a) **Performance Features :** First, owing to their mode of communication itself, there are many inbuilt differences between the two traditions. Since oral narratives are performance-oriented, the composition of the audience, the duration of performance and the mood of the audience determine the nature of the 'performance-text.'

Often, either to relieve the boredom of the audience or to bring in variety, singers are forced to introduce certain 'inset stories' not directly related to the main story. Instances of such 'inset stories' in the oral Bharatha-narratives (introduced earlier) are the 'Dharamabayi' and Radha-Krishna' episodes in *Bhil Bharath*; the incidents involving adventures to get rare flowers from Heaven like 'Kamandalu flower' and 'Janna chattari flower' in *Janapada Mahabharata Kathegalu*; and the independent stories of Chinmatha, Markandeya, Gaya, etc. in *Janapada Mahabharatha*. Most of these stories are either fairy tales or humorous or instances of Bhakti. However, what is clear is that the audience-orientation of oral narratives demands a critical approach different from that of the written narratives.

This point is borne out by the fact that an entire section in *Bhil Bharath* is devoted to the praise of *raagiyas* or secondary singers (section 7). It is obvious that unless the secondary singers also share the same enthusiasm of the primary singer (*Bhopo*), no performance can be a success.

b) **Ritualistic Aspect:** Secondly, most of the oral narratives are part of major rituals of the communities which give birth to them. Hence, certain incidents and details that may appear irrelevant to the outsiders may have a religious / ritualistic significance for the concerned communities.

For instance, there is a long episode in *Bhl Bharath* called "Pandavonka Senetara Yagnya." The major motif of this episode is 'the importance of the Guru' in any ceremony. At the time of Pandu's death, the Guru of Draupadi, Haragura, was not invited for the ceremonies; and hence they failed. Now, when the sons of Pandu are performing again the post-death ceremonies of Pandu, Haragura and others have to be invited; and some precious things like 'virgin gold,' 'new soil,' ' virgin water,' and 'one sold by one's wife' have to be got by the Pandavas.

If we notice that this episode is sung during the post-death rituals of the Bhil tribe, we realize why certain incidents and ceremonies unrelated to the Bharatha-story enter oral Bharatha-narratives.

c) **Texture of local culture and practices:** In the oral tradition, be it *The Ramayana* or *The Mahabharatha,* the text inhabits the world known to the community which gives birth to it, and it includes their beliefs and practices and the legends surrounding the places familiar to the community. Such localization is an important aspect of the oral narratives, distinguishing them from literary narratives.

The *Janapada Mahabharatha* in Kannada contains many incidents and details related to agriculture. For instance, whereas Kunti is the daughter of a king called Kuntibhoja in literary works, in this narrative she is the daughter of the Earth. The narrative designates her as '*dhanyalakshmi'* ('the goddess of food-grains') and relates her to an annual ritual, prevalent in Southern Karnataka, called '*Konti Pooje'* ('worship of Konti'). Similarly, when Kunti performs a ritual called '*Gajagauri Vrata,'* Kubera, the god of wealth, carefully gathers all the food-grains from the cattle-waste, because 'food-grains are more precious than pearls'; one Muddegowda invites Bhima to work in his fields when the Pandavas are in the city of Bakasura. Draupadi, working as a maid in the palace of king Virata, raises onions on the earth so that, while peeling its layers, Bhima, working as a cook there, may remember everyday the tears shed by her. All such details pertaining to agriculture and farming find a place in the narrative because both the singer and his legitimate audience are rural farmers.

In the same vein, the Kannada narrative incorporates in its body a local festival called '*Karaga,'* which is practiced by the 'followers of the Draupadi cult.'[10] Not only many recent towns in Karnataka and legends surrounding them find a place in that narrative, but also even modern people like Sir M. Vishweshwaraiah find a place there. Arjuna in his wanderings enters once a 'Muslim lane' and many Bharatha-characters use English words. What all these instances prove is that 'the oral narratives follow their own logic, anachronism or not.'

d) **Changing Ideology:** However, even within the inner core, there are significant divergences between the oral and literary Bharatha-narratives; and these appear to be defined by the **different ideologies** of the communities which give birth to the narratives in both the traditions.

The four oral narratives I have chosen for study in this paper are born in communities which are so distanced from one another both linguistically and geographically that communication among them is almost unimaginable. Still, there are striking similarities among all the four oral Bharatha-narratives, different from the literary ones of the same region and same language. For instance:

i) **Maternal uncle-nephew confrontation:**

All the oral narratives considered here reflect Krishna's enmity toward his nephew/s. In *Bhil Bharath***,** we are told that a demon called Eko enters the womb of Subhadra and later is born to her as Abhimanyu. Even before he is born, Krishna wishes to destroy him. When Abhimanyu gets ready to go to the battlefield, Krishna sees to it that his wife Uttara does not meet him to consummate their marriage. Also, even in the actual war, Krishna arranges things in such a way that Abhimanyu has to die. Similarly, in all the Kannada narratives, Krishna begins to dislike Abhimanyu (and other nephews) as soon as he is / they are born, since he knows that it is his enemy-demon that is in the womb of his / their mothers' womb/s. In fact in one, Krishna specifically declares that
"as soon as the baby is born, its neck should be broken."

But, in none of the literary Bharathas including the one by Vyasa, do we find Krishna antagonistic toward his nephew/s.

The reason for this difference seems to be that before the Hindu society shifted to the Patriarchal social system which, incidentally, has shaped all the literary narratives, there existed the Matriarchal system throughout India. (Even today, at least in theory, the Nayar-Tuluva-Gonda societies are matriarchal.) Since in a matriarchal society the right of ancestral property passes on from mother to daughter and since the mother's brother, generally, looks after and maintains the property, it is but natural that either direct or suppressed animosity exists between the maternal uncle and his nephew. Of course, the archetypal depiction of such animosity is in the Bhagawata itself which records Krishna's eventual destruction of his uncle Kamsa. The entire Kannada folk epic *Junjappa,* which belongs to the community of 'forest cowherds,' (and Krishna is a cowherd) narrates the constant and continued struggle of Junajappa against his seven maternal uncles. [11]

Arguably, the folk Bharathas reflect a matriarchal society which pits the maternal uncle against his nephew.

ii) **Fear of Incest:** All the oral narratives considered in this essay show the sons' suspicion of their mother's behaviour with one of them.

In *Bhil Bharath* , after Shantanu dies leaving behind his young wife, Gangeya (son of Shantanu and Ganga) looks after her; and this situation causes suspicion in the minds of Chitravirya and Vichitravirya. But when they realize that their suspicions are groundless, they plunge themselves into fire and commit suicide. In the Kannada narrative (**J. B. K.),** Aadashi (Vyasa) is seen talking to his step-mother at midnight by his brothers. They suspect their step-mother; but later they are full of remorse for their sin (of suspecting their own 'mother'), jump into fire and commit suicide.

But this incident is completely absent from both *Vyasa Bharatha* and other literary Bharathas. [12]

Probably, prior to the written Bharatha-narratives, there could have been stories about some incestuous relationship in some royal family. *Vyasa Bharatha* and other later Bharatha-narratives could have suppressed this incident since they found it against Vaidic or Varnashrama values. But, the oral Bharatha-narratives, outside the Varnashrama-system, could have retained, however indirectly, the incest-motif.

iii) **Eating the Corpse:**

Both the Kannada oral Bharathas depict a curious incident: while one shows all the Pandavas eating the corpse of Pandu, their dead father, the other shows only Sahadeva eating the small finger of the corpse and thereby acquiring knowledge of past and future.

According to Dr. L. R. Hegade, this incident is a fossil of a primitive custom; and he quotes a sociological work, *Folkways* by Sumner in support of his idea.[13] I am not sure whether this incident in the oral narratives should be taken literally, or symbolically of the sons' inheriting the knowledge of their forefathers.

iv) Differences in Characterisation :

a) **Draupadi:** Whereas in literary-written Bharathas Draupadi belongs to a prestigeous Kshatriya clan, the oral narratives depict her as either an incarnation of *Shakti* or as a spirit / demon born to destroy the warring classes. (We have to remember in this context that Vyasa's work suggests such a nature of Draupadi. When she is born, a voice from the sky announces that 'she will be the cause of the destruction of all Kshatrias:

Birth: In all the three oral Bharatha-narratives, Draupadi is of unknown parentage; she is found wandering in a jungle by the Pandavas and then she is brought home, with the promise that they will marry her. But in the literary-written Bharathas, she comes out of fire when the king Drupada conducts a *yagnya;* and she is brought up as a proud Kshatriya woman.

To the tribes and communities beyond the hierarchical Varnashrama system, the caste/clan of a person does not mean much. Hence, even though Draupadi becomes the queen of the kings of Indraprastha, they can show her as a person of unknown origins. But the literary narratives, which implicitly accept and endorse the vaidic social hierarchy, have to show Draupadi as one belonging to a reputed family of the Kshatriya caste.

Morality: There is a curious incident regarding Draupadi in *Bhil Bharath* ("Draupadi Aur Vasuki"). Once, when Draupadi is asleep and her hair is being combed by the maids, a single hair comes off. The frightened maids throw it out through the window and it breaks the earth and falls on Vasuki, the king of the netherworld. He sees the golden strand of hair, gets enamoured of the woman whose hair it is, and, searching for her, comes to Draupadi's palace. He sees there Draupadi in the company of Arjuna, ties Arjuna to a pillar, and forces himself on Draupadi. When this incident gets repeated, Draupadi asks for Karna's help and he defeats Vasuki and saves Draupadi.

There is a similar incident in a literary work called *Turanga Bharatha*, with one difference: while Vasuki's victim is Draupadi in *Bhil Bharath*, it is Bhanumati in *Turanga Bharath*.[14] What do this incident and change in the victim imply?

To a tribe like the Bhils, unaware of the hierarchical Varnashrama system , both the Kauravas and

Pandavas are the same; they are just rivals for power. For the same reason, they show Karna as a brave warrior, coming to the help of Draupadi. But the Varnashrama ideology that has created *Turanga Bharatha*, differentiates between the Kauravas and Pandavas as good and wicked people. The ideology also accepts the idea of Draupadi being one of the five *Pativratas.* Hence, it cannot show Draupadi, the Pandava-queen and a noble *pativrata,* as being a victim of rape. But Bhanumati is the wife of the wicked king Suyodhana; and hence she can be molested by Vasuki.

Spirit of Destruction: Whereas in the Bharathas of the written tradition Draupadi is a great woman of extremely strong will power seeking revenge, in the oral Bharatha-narratives she is either a demon born to destroy the Pandavas (**BB**) or the goddess of destruction born to destroy the Kauravas and all other such evil persons. How do we interpret this difference?

Alf Hiltebeitel, in his *Rethinking India's Oral and Classical Epics,* relates Draupadi of the *Mahabharatha* to both the 'Draupadi Cult' to be found in certain parts of India and the concept of '*Devi*' or the 'all powerful mother goddess' to be found in Indian oral epics.[15] He concludes that we have to accept "the notion of an 'underground' pan-Indian folk *Mahabharatha...* as a way of thinking about what might relate the Draupadi cult and the Pandav Lilas to historical contexts." (p. 299)

It is clear that at some point of time, the *Shakta* cult influenced most of the tribes and communities living away from towns and cities and that the portrayal of Draupadi as a 'Spirit of Destruction' is the result of such influence. In this context, what Shaila Mayaram has to say is interesting. She discusses another tribal / oral narrative, *Pandu ka Karaa*, in which she finds an equation between '*Durga'* and Draupadi, and she says: "Pandavas realize very soon that Devi Draupadi is going to be the cause of their death. They refer to Draupadi as 'the Death in the form of a queen.' However, the same Draupadi is the spirit of creation also; and she symbolizes both the Earth and its fertility." [16]

Karna: Next to Draupadi, the most distinguishing character in the oral Bharatha-narratives is Karna. All the post-Vyasa Bharathas picture Karna as a tragic figure. In fact, the first Kannada epic poet, Pampa, declares in his *Vikramarjuna Vijaya* (an epic which has Arjuna as its hero and which equates Arjuna with the poet's patron-king) thus: "If you wish to remember anybody (in his Bharatha), remember Karna, the man of truth."[17] The reason why Karna becomes a tragic character in literary works is because of the ideology of the Varnashrama system, which distinguishes between 'high' and 'low' castes. Karna, though born of an illustrious Kshatriya family as a brother to the Pandavas, he grows as the son of a 'low caste' boatman; and because of his supposed 'lowly birth,' he is discriminated against everywhere – by his Guru Parashurama, by Kaurava elders like Bhishma and Drona. He never gets the recognition he deserves. Thus, Karna is seen as the sad illustration of an exploitative, hierarchical Varnashrama system; hence sympathy for him in the post-Vyasa Bharatha-narratives.

But in oral Bharathas, Karna is not a major character at all. He is a brave soldier and he ends up as a commander in the army of Suyodhana. The reason is that the tribes that have created the oral narratives have an entirely different social system and a different world view. In other words, **Karna becomes a tragic figure demanding our sympathy and admiration only within the hierarchical Varnashrama system.** Outside it, he is just a brave warrior like others.

v) Man-centered World View:

One of the major incidents that does not find a place in the oral Bharatha-narratives is 'the burning of Khandavavana.' In all the literary Bharatha-narratives including *Vyasa Bharatha*, the 'Khandavavana dahana' is described in detail and in a celebratory tone. In order to build a new capital for the Pandavas, Krishna and Arjuna choose the place where the 'Khandava' forest lies. They invite Agni, the god of fire, to eat away the whole forest and Arjuna, with his bow and arrow ready, stands there to see that no bird, insect or creature escapes fire. In fact, the literary narratives describe vividly the way numberless serpents, birds, and beasts die helplessly in the fire.

The reason for the celebratory tone is the Man-centered view, expressed very pointedly in *Kumaravyasa Bharatha*: "Know that all moving and non-moving beings are born as food for Man."[18] This world-view, again, is at the heart of *varnashrama system.*

But this incident is not found, cannot find, a place in oral Bharatha narratives because the Bhils, the Gondas, the Kudubi-kunkna and such other tribes, whom these narratives belong to, are born in forests; and they grow up loving every tree, plant, bird and beast of the forest. Hence, they cannot even think of burning forests to build cities, even if they are to be the capitals of such noble men as the Pandavas.

III

On the basis of the analysis attempted till now of the Bharatha-narratives, both written and oral, the following conclusions could be hazarded:

1) Of the three categories of Bharatha-narratives, those in the second category (the post-Vyasa Bharathas in different Indian languages) can surely be seen as 'alternative' or 'counter' or 'subversive' narratives. For, consciously, either owing to the poet's different religion or regionality, the post-Vyasa Bharathas oppose and reject / qualify the 'varnashrama ideology' of the *Vyasa Bharatha.* Their opposition to that ideology may take any number of forms: rejection of Draupadi's polyandry, portrayal of Karna as a noble but

ill-fated tragic character, humanization of Duryodhana, rejection of miraculous incidents (divine origin of the birth of Pandavas), etc. Could we say the same thing about oral Bharatha-narratives and designate them as 'counter' or 'subversive' narratives? Although critics like Hiltebrand would like to consider them as subversive, their position does not seem to be tenable.[19] For, to be 'subversive' or to produce 'counter narratives,' the authors of such narratives have to have a prior knowledge of the 'original' narrative and the ideology that it is based on. All the singers / performers of oral Bharatha-narratives are 'illiterate' in the general sense of the term and they will not have heard of, let alone read, either **the** *Vyasa Bharatha* or other Bharathas. Their Bharatha- narratives are different only because their values, social system and world-view are different. Hence, we have to accept the fact that oral narratives like *Bhil Bharath* and *Janapada Mahabharatha* are **only different versions, and not subversions.**

2) The oral mode of communication by itself gives birth to certain differences between the oral and literary versions (inclusion of 'seemingly irrelevant' inset-stories, praise of the secondary singers, etc.).

3) Most of the oral narratives have a ritualistic function also in the communities in which they are born; hence they contain elaborate descriptions of certain community-specific rites and rituals.

4) Even when the tribes and communities receive a pan-Indian story, they make it their own; and through it they record their beliefs and fears, their customs and their history. Hence, we find references, even at the cost of anachronism, to local legends and practices, local customs, and local history in the oral narratives.

5) Most importantly, the major divergences between the oral and written Bharatha-traditions are the result of different ideologies and social structures. Hence, we find in oral Bharatha-narratives a Draupadi of unknown parentage, Karna shorn of his tragic grandeur (to be found in the 'counter Bharathas), Krishna-Abhimanyu antagonism, and motifs of incest.

   Also, certain exclusions in the oral tradition are meaningful. There is no incident of 'disrobing of Draupadi publicly' since it is too embarrassing for a tribal mind and no burning of Khandavavana since forest-dwellers do not believe in a man-centered world-view. There is no Kurukshetra war (excepting Abhimanyu's war and death) since the rural-tribal mind cannot conceive of a large-scale war in which thousands of soldiers are killed, and no philosophical sermons like the *Gitopadesha,* since the philosophy of life to which the tribal people subscribe is entirely different from that of the Varnashrama system.

6) Since oral narratives, unlike the written ones, change from generation to generation and singer to

singer, they are more prone to the influence of new cults and cult-practices. The influence of the *Shakta* cult is visible in the portrayal of Draupadi as demon / goddess of destruction (as in the portrayal of Sita in certain oral Ramayanas) because the *Shakta / Tantric* cults, being non-Vaidic, were more popular among the rural people and forest dwellers.

The ingenious ways in which different cultures and communities in India have found the Bharatha / Ramayana narratives a suitable site to register their own identity, anxieties and aspirations, and beliefs and values can best be illustrated with reference to a curious oral narrative called *Pandu ka Kara*, the only 'Muslim' Bharatha in India. According to Shail Mayaram, who brought this narrative to light, there is a community called 'Meo' in Hariyana and north-eastern Rajasthan, which has cultivated a double identity of its own – the Muslim and Rajput identity. *Pandu ka Kara*,[20] it seems, is the most popular narrative of the community; and both its legitimate performers and audience are Muslims. But they acknowledge Rama and Krishna as their ancestors. In this Bharath-narrative, Gorakhnath, called 'Fakir,' plays a major role; he gives childless Kunti and Gandhari barley-grains sanctified by his blessings, and, as a result, Pandavas and Kauravas are born. The point to be noticed is that Gorakhnath here combines in him the roles of both *'Jogi'* and *'Fakir.'* In other words, this Bharatha-narrative is a telling illustration of how both the Hindu and Muslim cultures have found the Bharata-story a suitable canvas to register their mutual relationships and multiple identity.

The peregrinations of cultural-literary forms in India and the local textures they acquire are so varied and continuous that, arguably, they best represent the Spirit of India if one can formulate such a huge abstraction.

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NOTES

1 Romila Thapar, "The Historian and the Epic," *Annals of BORI*, Lx, Poona, 1979, p. 201.

2 *Bhil Bharath*, sung by Nathubhayi Bhurabhayi, was collected by Bhagavandas Patel. Tr. into Hindi by Mrudula Pareek, *Bhilon ka Bharath* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2000). I have followed the Hindi translation.

3 Introduction, *Bhilon Ka Bharath*, pp. viii-ix.

4 Synopsis: (1) marriage of king Shantanu and the goddess Ganga; the birth of their three sons: Gaangeya, Chitravirya and Vichitravirya; the death of Shantanu. *(2)* By the blessings of the seven sages, five Pandavas to Kunti and 28 Kauravas to Gandhari are born. (3) curse on Pandu – Pandu's death – his funeral rites. *(4)* Kunti abandons the child born before her marriage, hiding it in a field; the gardener of the Kauravas finds it, takes it home, and names it as Karna; Karna grows into a brave warrior and ends up becoming an officer in the Kaurava army. *(5)* Vasuki, the king of serpents in the netherworld, sees a hair of Draupadi, falls in love with her, reaches her palace, and forces himself on her. *(6)* Once, following Draupadi in her nocturnal movements, Bhima comes to know that she is actually a demon in the form of a woman and that she has cast her spell on all her husbands except Dharmaraya. *(7)* Bhima realizes, when he unsuccessfully attempts to sing like Sahadeva,

that accompanying a main singer (in public performances) is not to be slighted. *(8)* This 16-page long episode narrates the adventures and hardships the Pandavas undertake to help their dead father attain *'sadgati.'* *(9)* The Kauravas, in their boyhood, unable to bear the mischief of Bhima, attempt to kill him as a sacrifice to a goddess. *(10)* Hidimbaa, the ogress, falls in love with Bhima and marries him; a son called Ghatotkacha is born to her; Bhima and Ghatotkacha save Kunti from the Kauravas who had kidnapped her. *(11)* Krishna, accompanied by Narada, enters the world of the demons, is caught by them, and escapes through his cunning. *(12)* A demon called Eko gets imprisoned in a cage by Krishna's cunning. *(13)* At the time of Subhadra's marriage with Arjuna, the demon Eko enters her womb; later he is born to her as her son. *(14)* Offended by the arrogance of the Kauravas, Narada comes to meet the Pandavas. *(15)* Bored with her life in heaven, Indrani, the wife of Indra, comes down to earth, and wishes to marry a brave human being; Abhimanyu accepts her and defeats Indra who challenges him for a fight. *(16)* The king, Virata, agrees to give his daughter Uttara in marriage to Abhimanyu; the marriage party overcomes, with Krishna's help, all the obstacles placed by the king to test them. *(17)* Following Krishna's distribution of three continents to the Pandavas and one to the Kauravas, the Kauravas get angry and decide on war. *(18)* In order to win the war, Krishna advises the Pandavas to acquire some rare things; and Arjuna goes down to the nether world to get them. *(19)* The Kauravas declare war; since Arjuna is not with them ; Abhimanyu comes forward to accept the challenge. *(20)* This is another long and important part. Since Abhimanyu's marriage with Uttara has not been consummated, word is sent to her to immediately come and join her husband. But, Krishna sees to it that her journey is delayed; and by the time she reaches the Pandava camp, Abhimanyu has already left for the war.
(21) Abhimanyu dies in the war; the Kauravas also die. *(22)* Arjuna is in uncontrollable grief over the death of his son; finally the soul of Abhimanyu comes to him and consoles him that everyone's days are numbered. *(23)* The success in the war turns the head of Arjuna and Krishna teaches him a lesson. *(24)* Dharamabayi is worried that she will be put to shame in her daughter's marriage since she has no brothers; Bhima agrees to be her brother and conducts the marriage of his 'niece.' *(25)* Arjuna meets Kali in the nether world and comes to know that it is going to be his age. *(26)* All the four Pandavas and Draupadi fall down on the way to the Heaven; only Dharmaraja reaches the Vaikuntha alive. *(27)* In order to demonstrate that women have fleeting nature, Krishna comes out of Radha's house, enters it again as a bangle-seller, and seduces her successfully.

5 N. R. Nayak collected the songs related to the Bharata-story, and published them as *Gamokkalu Mahabharata* in 1962. The ten sections of it are: a) Dharmaru, b) Geejaga, c) Subhadra, d) Lakshmana, e) Arjuna, f) Kusumali, g) Four wives, h) Kanakangi Kalyana, i) Abhimanyu and j) Savitri

6 Coll. L. R. Hegade, *Janapada Mahabharathada Kathegalu* (Kumta: Jnyanasadhana Granthamale, 1980).

7 Synopisis: *(1)* Baava monk falls in love with a boatman's daughter and she gives birth to four children. The first one flies to the sky as soon as he is born; the other three grow up as Aadashi, Gantashi, and Dantashi. The latter two once suspect their own mother's behaviour with Aadashi and in remorse commit self immolation; out of the fire four people emerge: they are Pandoraja, Kailoraja, Kunti and Gandori. *(2)* Pandoraja kills the male deer while it is making love to a female; the female deer curses the king. *(3)* the birth of Pandavas and Kauravas *(4)* Pandu's death - his sons begin to eat the flesh of his dead body - Krishna's advice to cremate the dead. *(5)* Bhima wins always in games and harasses the Kauravas. *(6)* The *'Lakshagriha'* episode. *(7)* In the belief that the Pandavas are dead, the Kauravas perform post-death ceremonies; Bhima comes there disguised as a cook, and eats up the entire food. *(8)* Bhima's gluttony *(9-10)* Bhima kills the demons Bakasura and Shambarasura. *(11)* Siriyamma declares that among all gods and humans, the Pandavas are the noblest. *(12-13-14)* Bhima gets the rare *'Kamandala'* flower; Arjuna gets

the *'Janna Chattari'* flower; and they together get *'Kendali'* flower. *(15-16)* Because Rupata Devi, Krishna's sister, reaches adulthood before marriage, she is abandoned in a forest; the Pandavas see her and bring her home; as per the mistaken advice of Kunti, all the five marry her. *(17)* Bhima's devotion cannot be measured. *(18)* Arjuna, disguised as a monk, woos and marries Subhadra, Krishna's sister. *(19)* Coming to know that the foetus in Subhadra's womb is really a demon, his enemy, Krishna plans to kill it. *(20)* This popular story is found in many oral narratives. After the defeat of Dharmaraja in the dice game, Draupadi invites Duryodhana to play a game with her, distracts him with her charms, and wins back everything; Bhanumati becomes her maid. *(21)* Dushaasana attempts in vain to disrobe Draupadi in the court. *(22)* Bhima kills Kichaka who covets Draupadi, in the palace of king Virata. *(23)* Krishna's attempts at arranging a treaty between the warring cousins fails. *(24)* Krishna persuades Duryodhana to wear a loin cloth before meeting his mother performing a ritual and thus Duryodhana's body below waist remains vulnerable. *(25-26)* Both Duryodhana and Abhimanyu are killed. *(27)* Among the Pandavas, only Dharmaraya reaches the world of gods, alive.

8 *Janapada Mahabharatha*, sung by Bettadabidu and collected by P. K. Rajashekhara (Mysore: Honnaru Janapada Gayakaru, 2004).

9 *Gondara Ramayana*, sung by Thimmappa Gonda and collected by Hi. Chi. Boralingaiah (Kannada University, Hampi: Prasaranga, 1999).

10 Karaga' is an annual festival popular in Tamilnadu and Southern Karnataka. Those who observe this ritual-festival are called 'Thigala' and they claim they belong to Vanhi kula. The ritual consists of fire-walking, sword fight, and a long procession in which the priest dressed as a woman carries a Kalasha (symbolic of a virgin woman) on his head. Alf Hiltebeitel relates this Karaga festival with the cult of Draupadi on the one hand and on the other Draupadi of *Mahabharatha*.

11 *Junjappa,* is a long oral epic of the 'forest cowherds,' sung by Dasappa and collected by Chaluvaraju (Kannada Univ., Hampi: Prasaranga, 1997).

12 In a medieval *Mahabharatha* in Kannada by Kumaravyasa, this incident is changed to just overhearing of a conversation between Bhishma and his step-mother, by his two step-brothers.

13 L. R. Hegade, introduction, p. iii (Sumner, p. 286).

14 Gaurish Kaikini, *Samagra Sahitya*, Vol. 10 (Ankola: Shree Raghavendra Prakashana, 2002), pp. 160-161.

15 Alf Hiltebeitel, *Rethinking India's Oral and Classical Epics: Draupadi Among Rajputs, Muslims & Dalits* (Chicago & London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 500. The full quotation runs thus: "Evidently Draupadi, or the supreme Sakti (also known as Mahadevi) in becoming Draupadi, did not have enough human flesh and blood to satiate her."

16 Shail Mayaram, "Meos of Mewat," in *India Together*, 4/1/2006, pp. 2-3.

17 Pampa is the first epic poet in Kannada and he lived in the 10th century. For further details, see: ed. TRS Sharma, *Ancient Indian Literature*, Vol. Three (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 2000), pp. 430-489.

18 *Kumaravyasa Bharatha,* 1: 20: 67.

19 Alf Hiltebeitel, pp. 7-9

20 Shail Mayaram, p.3

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textual and contextual dynamism of mahabharata in indian art

With special reference to the Narratives on Mahabharata war

—Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal

Mahabharata is the most widely known textual literature with an appeal in both the religious and non-religious contexts. The kind of personal experiences the text Mahabharata offers is unique and intriguing to a poet, a painter, a sculptor, an actor, a dancer, a musician, a narrator or any creative mind as a matter of fact. This brief survey indicates the increasing interest in the adaptation of Vyasa Mahabharata text in the length and breadth of the country sustaining as a dynamic story line subjected to the process of contextualization.

The Wheel of Life - the wheel of chariot
'After joy, sorrow; after sorrow, joy
After day, night; and after night; the day;
Ceaselessly they rotate on, the Wheel of Life;
And between the two broods peace always
The Mahabharata

Mahabharata is the most widely known textual literature with an appeal in both the religious and non-religious contexts. This text is an outstanding model, where the Indian cultural values are manifested beyond the constraints of time, place and language. The power of its principal elements such as, the long and continuity of storyline and its scope for interpretation, the portrayal of characters and the sequences associated with the content are so strongly established, so that even to criticise or to deny out rightly its contribution to Indian socio-cultural lives, one has to make a serious attempt of contextualising the text in its original sense, where one tends to be gripped and experienced by its powerful fold.

The kind of personal experiences the text Mahabharata offers is unique and intriguing to a poet, a painter, a sculptor, an actor, a dancer, a musician, a narrator or any creative mind as a matter of fact. The nature of the text and narration drives oneself to the known experience to the world of enlightened experience. The names of the characters are very dear to common people even today, that they name the new born by calling one of the positive characters of Mahabharata, and most of the times it is the names of Krishna, Vasudeva, Balarama, Arjuna, Parthasarathi, Dhanjaya, Vidura, Bheema, Sahadeva, Nakula, Dharmaesha, all Pandava brothers, but not the 100 names of Kaurava brothers or Shakuni. These names are eternally in circulation since time immemorial and would continue to exist as the cultural icons finding their prevalence not only in India. This shows the power of impact of Mahabharata text in the context of socio-cultural life.

The Process of Textual to Contextual:

This brief survey indicates the increasing interest in the adaptation of Vyasa Mahabharata text in the length and breadth of the country sustaining as a dynamic story line subjected to the process of contextualization. There are regional versions of Mahabharata, for instance Kumaravyasa Bharata in Karnataka. During the process of moving from textual to contextual, the performing and Visual art forms saw a great potential in the story and characters of *Mahabharata* to integrate the potential elements such as narration, emotion and analytical framework. By using these elements the creative artist dimensionalised the text. One artist presents emotionally evocative abstract figures (allegorical narratives), while the other emphasizes intellectually oriented rhetorical images. Subjects rated the artworks before and after receiving either descriptive, formal stylistic, or contextual information in a within-subjects repeated measures design. Figurative works had a major impact after the first viewing, while the reverse was found for rhetorical images. (Paisley Livingston, New Literary History, Volume 29, Number 4, Autumn 1998pp. 831-846)

The intellectual and academic debates and dialogues are in progress regarding the process of transformation and application of textual to contextual dynamics. Among several ways, the expressive dynamism of contextualizing the text through the visual arts such as painting, sculpture or illustration is very effective because in this process the text gets recorded contextually on more or less permanent basis. Another powerful medium or expression is through performing arts such as, dance, music, theatre or puppetry, though they create a very impactful and direct experience on the viewers, ordained with temporal dynamism, the text is experienced within a time frame, where the viewer and the artist co-experience the text no doubt, but the experience is not long lasting like a visual record, which is in the form of painting and sculpture. Pictures serve many functions when used as adjuncts to text.

In India the Buddhist textual contents, narrative of Buddha's life and jataka tales were pasteurised in the paintings and sculptures of pre-Ajanta, Ajanta and post Ajanta phases. These visual narratives played a great role in communicating Buddhist tenets to the purpose of spread of Buddhism. The Gupta era has championed the *sanatana dharma* too along with Buddhism in the length and breadth of their empire. As a result the forms of Vishnu, such as Varaha, Narasimha and Vamana, regarded in Rigveda, the Rudra (Shiva) and the feminine principles in the form of Gayatri, Saraswati, and Sri, were hailed as Gods and Goddesses. The *purana* texts were compiled to create textual contents in this direction and they were composed and contextualised dynamically in the visual forms. But still, there was a dearth need of a text that could herald the *sanatana* ethos and stand parallel to Buddhist visual dynamism.

The text and content of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* was treated as Sanskrit *kavya* literature in the beginning was soon adapted to reciting. The story caught the imagination of commoners and intellectuals alike during the Gupta times. Schematisation, portrayal and narration of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* began to appear in visual sources in a sociological context during Gupta period because the *Mahabharata* illustrations belonging to pre-Gupta or Gupta period are yet to be discovered. In post-Gupta period the episodes of *Mahabharata* are well depicted in narrative sculptures, where the text was contextualised. The Dasavatara Caves of Ellora dated to 8th century depicts the incarnations of Mahavishnu.

Dynamism in the Narrative Sculptures of Mahabharata:

In the early phases of narrative sculptures, hardly any sectarian differences are found. The *vaishnava* themes, such as the incarnations of Vishnu *Bhagavata* themes, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* found their due place in *Shaiva* temples. Similarly the themes of *shaiva* and *shakta* narratives were found along with the shrines dedicated to *Vaishnavism*. It is very much clear that there were no such demarcated sectarian differences while depicting the themes in visual forms, in contrast to what we experience in later centuries. The episodes from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Bhagavata*, *Shaiva puranas*, *Shakta puranas* and *panchatantras* and local legends were popular, and found enough space while building the temples.

The episodes from *Bhagavata*, the *parvas* from *Mahabharata* and the Great war of Kurukshetra received higher attention and appreciation in the consideration of narrative space. The sculptural panels are located on the wall freeze, pillar medallions, *vimanas* and *gopuras*, ceilings, basement frieze, door-jambs, free-standing walls, and such other architectural space. The interesting episodes are picked with care for the text to contextualise in the form of visual narratives.

Portrayal of Mahabharata Episodes in Art

Artistic representation of the Mahabharata *parvas* received lesser attention compared to Ramayana or Shiva purana portrayal in art either painting or sculpture. It is rather difficult to assign reasons specifically. When we take the instance of Ramayana, Rama is the hero of Ramayana and his story is filled with sad sequences, received better recognition in art forms. The emotion of pathos draws the common folk throughout, their sympathy lies with Rama, then Dasharatha, then towards Seeta, and to Bharata. Finally the reunion of Rama and Seeta with the rest of the family at Ayodhya and the portrayal of coronation ceremony, believed that brings peace and harmony in society. The war sequences in Ramayana is quite significant: it was a war with another race far away from the kingdom of Rama, Seeta the symbol of righteousness was to be rescued, who was kidnapped on the lines of treachery. Rama respected all including monkeys and he fought the fearful war with mighty Ravana, with the support of monkey race. The character of Rama and all episodes displaying his compassion towards people he met, travelling from north to south India, is the matter and content that impressed people by and large. By 4th century CE, the text of Ramayana was standardised, the episodes were taken by the artists to illustrate on the space earmarked for artistic representation in Temple architecture.

When it comes to Mahabharata, there are several issues that relate to visual representation poses as challenge. The first and foremost is the mammoth size of the text, there are so many subthemes, so many characters with complicated relationships and many a time not really connect to people. Because the entire story takes place in the royal court scenario, issues related to royal life, the animosity brooded from childhood between two branches of family who are bothers, kiths and kin's, crossing the boundaries of dignity, modesty and human understanding. The narrative art first flourished with the development of Buddhist art. By 4th century CE, Vakataka Gupta patronage towards Vedic resurgence began to realise the importance of narratives in visual and performing arts. But this was also the time that Mahabharata must have attained its present bulk of added 82,000 stanzas, and have come to be popularly called as Shatasahasri samhita. Small alterations and additions continued to be made even after the fourth century as the comparison of the northern and southern recessions would indicate. (P L Vaidya, The Mahabharata. its history and character, The Cultural Heritage of India Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, Reprint 1982) Incarnations of Mahavishnu was reaching the people, stories representing these incarnations were standardised, iconography of each form was specified and thematically it had occupied the vast area of the architecture.

Another reason, perhaps, the emergence of *Bhakti* movement epitomised the characters of Rama and Krishna, who are the heroes of two great epics of India. Sri Rama as the symbol of ideals had already elevated to the divine status, Krishna and Buddha were under consideration. Krishna was demystified in art and portrayed as the adorable child. Myths and miracles associated with the birth and growth of Krishna, though considered as *Bhagavata*, it is part of Mahabharata for artists because Krishna was also having his childhood and adulthood at Brindavan and Mathura as much as Pandava brothers and Kauravas at Hastinavati. Large number of episodes and their objectives were complicated to understand by the common folk.

While observing the chronological setting of Ramayana and Mahabharata as visual representation, in north India during Gupta era, they were firmly established as the texts. Apart from Buddhist art and architecture, Hindu structures have not survived much. The Deogarh Temple is the best surviving, to associate with the Gods and Goddesses, incarnations of Mahavishnu and the panel depicting Pandavas. Despite the popularity of the epic Mahabharata, the visual illustrations of the text not found till 2nd century CE. There again Krishna's portrayal finds greater favour with the artists than the rest, for which the source of inspiration can be more than one. The earliest representation of Krishna in figurative form is seen on the coins of Agathacles of 2 century BCE. B C Chandra has identified another instance of Krishna learning Brahmi alphabets at Guru Sandipani hermitage on a terracotta plaque from Sugh Haryana of 2nd Century BCE (V P Dvivedi P 127). This piece is in National Museum Delhi recognized as child learning Brahmi alphabets. Another early representation of Mahabharata theme often found in all narrative panels is from Dashavatara Temple Deogarh, Arjuna's penance for *Pashupata*. Later this episode was depicted in all medieval temple architecture.

Sculptural representation of Mahabharata includes the episodes of *Krishnaleela*, which were heightened the imagination of a sculptor, painter and poets to portray.

The early portrayal of Pandavas are part of Deogarh Dashavatara temple, then followed in the narrative idiom of Chalukyan style on the pillars of Virupaksha and Mallikarjuna temples in Pattadakal. One of the depictions on the south face of a column is focussed on the council of war. On the second central band Bhishma, the great personality of Mahabharata is shown lying on the bed of arrows, Krishna and Arjuna are on the chariot facing each other in conversation, mourning soldiers are surrounded,. In the third band of the same pillar the narration of fight between Duryodhana and Bhima is portrayed.

The next phase is the evolution and development of Temple architecture, rock-cut and structural under the Chalukyas of Badami or known as western Chalukyas. On the basement, walls and pillar medallions of the temples of Aihole and Pattadakal, the first narrative sculptures on Ramayana theme emerge here and well represented. Only one instance of Mahabharata episode of Bhishma *Parva* is represented on the pillar medallion of Virupaksha Temple Pattadakal. But the Incarnations of Varaha, Narasimha, Trivikrama and Vishnu as Ananta and such forms are represented in the cave architecture of Badami during 6-8th century CE. Down south, the Pallava's architecture identified the five free standing temples carved through the boulders at Mahabalipuram as Pandava Rathas, from Draupadi to Dharmaraya the five Rathas. But there is no evidence for this identification; probably they were associated with Pandavas in later times.

The episode of *Kiratarjuniya*, where Arjuna receives the *pashupatastra* from Shiva as boon, is clearly identified on the upper band of a second column on the pillar medallion of Pattadakal. There are several visually recorded versions of this episode both in painting and sculpture are found. There is a pictorial depiction in Lepakshi Murals and also on the wall freeze of Hoysala temples and Vijayanagar temples in well carved sculptural form. Chennakeshava Temple Belur, Amruteshvara Temple Amrutapura, Hoysaleshvara Temple Halebeedu, all in Hoysala style are credited with portrayal of Krishnaleela sequences, Arjuna aiming the arrow to strike the *Matsyabedha* challenge to win the hands of Draupadi, scene of playing dice by Pandavas and Kauravas, Draupadi *Vastrapaharana* and such others.

Illustrated Manuscript tradition too from 16th century onwards gave importance to Mahabharata episodes. Mahabharata and its story line caught the attention of painters. The artistes immortalised the themes related to Pandavas and their combat with Kauravas, the scenes from their *vanavas*, the Kurukshetra war along with the episodes portray Krishna's story, *Gitopadesha*, found central place in the painting schools of Pahadi and Rajasthani miniatures.

The celebrated artist of 19th century Raja Ravi Varma brought to life the character of Draupadi as Sairendhri, the episode Kichaka vadha, Krishna as Emissary to Kaurava Court. Through his paintings and oleograph prints he popularised Mahabharata in art. In course of time *Gitopadesha* panel, in all mediums such as stone, metal and wood has become more popular where standing Krishna giving discourse on righteousness to seated Arjuna, before the celebrated chariot by which Krishna earned the epithet as Parthasarathi.

Portrayal of Mahabharata War in Art

A significant episode of the great Indian Epic Mahabharata is the Kurukshetra War. The 18 days war has changed the entire scenario of life of common people as well as the kings of the land. It must have taken a longer time to reset the political and social life of the land and people. What emerged from the ashes of this war that remains as eternal truth of one's own understanding is the '*Geetopadesha*' Krishna delivering the eternal truth in the midst of Kurukshetra War. The dialogue that takes place between Arjuna, the warrior and Krishna the charioteer, or between two *sakhas*, the intimate friends, or between the *bhakta* and the God, is awe-inspiring.

The incredible dialogue happens before the chariot as a grand backdrop, which Arjuna and Krishna rode that morning to fight the war of Kurukshetra. There are certain curious accounts about the Chariot employed by Arjuna and Krishna. This chariot was donated by Agni (the God of fire, energy) to Arjuna when Krishna and Arjuna quenched the hunger of Agni in the Episode of Khandava Vana. Arjuna and Krishna were in the form of Nara-Narayana and won over Indra and Takshaka and created favourable atmosphere to Agni. Pleased Agni offered Arjuna the chariot which was inexhaustible and unconquerable by anyone. He also received his inexhaustible bow, arrow and quiver from Varuna (the God of Sea).

In the chapter Khandavadahana Vaishampayana narrates (Stanzas 11 to 18) how Arjuna and Krishna waged war to help Agni to consume Khandava forest to flames. Pleased Agni in return gave Arjuna a beautiful chariot filled with powerful weapons. Yoked to that chariot were steeds as white horses as the silver or the fiery clouds, they were born in the region of *Gandharvas*, and they were all adorned with golden harness. They had the speed of the wind or the mind. The chariot was equipped with every instruments of war, and was capable of being vanquished by the enemies of any kind. The splendor of the chariot is very great, and the sound of its wheels was tremendous: it delighted the heart of every creature that looked at it. It was created by Prajapati after severe ascetic meditation. It was as effulgent as the sun, and the splendour was so great that none could gaze at it. It was that very chariot riding on which the lord Soma defeated the *Danavas*. It was furnished with an excellent flag-staff of golden colour and beauty. Arjuna attired in armour, armed with sword and his fingers incased in leather, ascended the chariot as a virtuous man. (N Dutt, P 304-305) It was such a chariot which could be deployed by great warriors in great wars such as Kurukshetra war.

Krishna's Chariot

The chariot bestowed by Agni to Arjuna was splendid and sparkling in golden hues like the sacramental fire of Agni. Structurally it had a beautifully carved pavilion for the rider and a short but proportionate sub-pavilion to charioteer. This gave protection from sun wind and rain but enough space to stand for the warrior to fight with bow and arrows with powerful moving wheels with properly deployed axels. The flag of the Arjuna's chariot is known as *kapi-dhvaja*, the flag of monkey, the Hanuman. It was the blessings of Hanuman to provide additional strength whenever Arjuna needed. Hence the chariot of Arjuna-Krishna was called *Kapi-Dhvaja*, yoked by four horses with their names as **Saibya, Sugriva, Meghapuspa** and **Balahaka.** Further *Padma Purana* mentions that Saibya when gallops looks like the wings of parrot, green in colour, Sugriva is of golden yellow, Meghapushpa as the name suggests looks like emerging from clouds and Balahaka was like snow white. One can visualize when such colourful horses are yoked to the chariot; it stole the sight of entire Kurukshetra.

Several Indian scriptures have compared a chariot to *sarira*, the human body. The battle field Kurukshetra is compared to the intense battle taking place in the mind. The seated Arjuna is the *jiva*, the individual or the soul looking for enlightenment, the charioteer is none other than Krishna, the *paramathma*, self illumined, *svayam prakasha*, the chariot moves majestically between the two armies, the Kauravas, the negative forces and Pandavas, the positive forces. The reins that Krishna holding is the mind, the *chitta*, horses are the human senses, the *indriyas*. Krishna gives his Sermon on *Dharma*, the Righteousness and the chariot has to be driven only towards the path of *Dharma,* is the ultimate destination. The charioteer Krishna as *paramatma* guides the *jivatma*, Arjuna to the righteous path and concludes the Kurukshetra war, with the final chanting……………….

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥४-७॥

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥४-८॥

Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, Arjuna and Krishna, this human and this divine, stand together not as seers in the peaceful hermitage of meditation, but as fighter and holder of the reins in the clamorous of field, in the midst of the hurtling shafts, in the chariot of the battle. The Teacher of Gita is therefore not only the God in man who unveils himself in the world of knowledge, but the God in man who moves our whole world of action, by and for whom all our humanity exists and struggles and labours, towards whom all our life travels and progresses. He is the secret Master of works and sacrifice and Friend of the human peoples (Ed Maheshwar P.11)

Arjuna-Krishna's *Rath* Confines to Flames

Whatever has the origin has the end as well. The celebrated chariot having significant role in winning the Kurukshetra war also meets an end! This exemplifies the Law of Nature! After *Gitopadesha,* followed with the war Pandavas won at the cost of losing their own kiths and kin's, their elders, their dear ones, and the Kauravas, who were their brothers, the war finally concluded. Before the sun set of the war, there was nothing that the Pandavas can think of winning. Yudhishthira weeps like a child and sobs after the war, he is still unable to believe he is successful in war, or that there is no war, no more strife, and no more hatred. He finds it difficult to the changed situation. He could nether rest nor sleep, as the night rolled on. Arjuna was still on chariot, waiting for Sri Krishna to get down first, and then stretch a hand of support to him to help him alight too, as usual! While climbing on, it was Sri Krishna first; Arjuna next, while alighting it was the other way round, every day all the days of Kurukshetra war. But today Keshava was still there in the chariot. After seeing the *Vishvaroopa Darshana,* Arjuna felt uncomfortable to see Keshava in that mean position as a mere charioteer, but *maya* covers one's vision to drive that divine experience as normal. Arjuna requests Krishna to alight, but Krishna says it will be reverse today, Arjuna reminds him of protocol but Krishna commands Arjuna just obey what he says, Arjuna requests for rile reason, but Krishna tells him to get down first and will know then.

Arjuna thought there must be some mystery behind this command and obeyed. Sri Krishna united the horses and freed them. Then he waved to the Hero on the flag, Hanuman, as if to tell him: you are free hereafter, I appreciate your services. Hanuman folded his hands and bent down his head with reverence and flew away to Himalayas, the horses too disappeared! Arjuna came down and bowed to the chariot in gratitude. Then Krishna came down and walked towards Arjuna, suddenly a big blast was heard and lo! The chariot of Arjuna-Krishna confined to flames. Then in a flash of second, chariot went into blaze, with the flames reaching to the skies and was reduced into ashes. All other Pandavas were aghast without knowing the significance.

Sri Krishna cleared their minds saying, 'Friends, this was a chariot gifted by god Agni during the Khandava episode, it is proper that it is returned to its source once the use is over, is it right to keep beyond use? It was in form and good shape because I was present in the chariot; otherwise the great weapons missiles used against it by Drona, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa and Ashvathama would have burnt it long ago! The chariot withstood all that because of the divinity bestowed with it.'
(K.S Narayanacharya: P 867 - 70) Despite all this, the chariot was balanced in every way as long as Krishna was

controlling. Once he dismounted the chariot confines to inexhaustible flames proving everything is *niyamita.*

As the textual narration goes, there were more than 660 *Jaitra Rathas* and *Vynayika Rathas* (full fledged war chariots), consists of Arjuna-Krishna Ratha followed by all Pandavas, heads of their allies, Kauravas and their allies, they were all called as *Maharathis* (Masters of powerful chariots), each of the head of the army units armed with great chariots. The chariots arc to be worshipped by the maker, Master and charioteer, the *puja vidhi* is elaborately performed before entering the battle field. The description of Karna performing the *puja karma* for his chariot is given in the *Karnaparva*. One of the Great War strategies was creating and designing the Vyuha pattern, which is operational. In the Kurukshetra war more than 11 *Vyuhas* were created and deployed. Some of the names are *Sarvatomukha Vyuha, Vajra Vyuha, Garuda Vyuha, Ardhachandra Vyuha, Makara Vyuha, Shakata Vyuha, Chakra Shakata Vyuha, Chakravyuha, Krauncha Vyuha, Syena Vyuha, Sagara (Ocean) Vyuha* (Sensarma P: 139). In the Kurukshetra war the composition of four arms were put to force, namely, the chariots, elephantry, cavalry and foot-soldiers. They were operated in combination while designing the *Vyuha*.

The *Chakravyuha* has a significant place in the happenings of Kurukshetra war. That was the darkest day of the war, the thirteenth day, Drona, Karna, Kripa, Ashvathama brought shame for them. Drona had arranged the army in circular, it resembled the wheel of a chariot with one wellprotected entrance **(K S Narayanacharya: P 550).** If someone enters it is a death trap, as one will not know in which lane to proceed and avoid or come out. Return is almost impossible unless one who knows to exit. Young Abhimanyu was trapped in an unbelievable *Chakravyuha* and reached a state of no return. Arjuna was continuously experiencing bad omens, his chariot moves fast and his mind was moving faster in frenzy. For a hero who had heard *Bhagavat Gita* from Krishna himself was not able to imagine the harsh reality of losing his brave son. But Krishna was envisaging as Parthasarathi to break the news of Abhimanyu's tragic end, trapped in *Chakravyuha.*

A clear representation of Mahabharata war is narrated on the north basement screen of the Kailasa Cave Temple Ellora in late 8th century CE. Story of Kiratarjuniya, Abhimanyu entering *Chakravyuha*, in the fourth and fifth row of the screen is a spectacular depiction of Mahabharata war portraying Arjuna and the charioteer Krishna. Karna, in his chariot *Atiratha*, which has two pavilions aiming at his opponent Arjuna, and Arjuna along with Krishna in their chariot of three pavilions known as *Maharatha* facing Karna stood in an intense combat. The second part of the screen has two bands portraying *Krishnaleela* scenes from *Bhagavata purana*. A *Chakravyuha* in sculptural relief is found in the sculptural frieze in Hoysala style of architecture at Halebidu in Karnataka.

Despite ghastly destructive nature, Mahabharata War is the synthesis of different accounts contrasting and questioning human endeavour. Sukthankar (Lecture delivered in Asiatic Society Bombay in 1942) remarks on the meaning of Mahabharata and its three dimensional views: On the mundane plane it is a story deals with the realistic account of a fierce battle centred on the epic characters. On the ethical plane it is the war as a conflict between *dharma* and *adharma*. The story is projected on the cosmic background of Bharata war, where Krishna was to prove as an incarnation of Mahavishnu, the Pandava brothers were the incarnations of Dharma, Vayu, Indra and the Ashvins, the Kauravas were the incarnations of *asuras* and *daityas*. Dhrutarashtra was the incarnation of Hamsa, the son of Arista Duryodhana and his brothers were the Pulastya demons, Duryodhana and Shakuni were the Kali and Dvapara respectively. Thirdly on the psychological plane, the epic aims at impressing upon all creative souls, the paramount of moral values. Metaphysically each of 100,000 stanzas stands for interpretation of deeper meaning and ever the fresh material to the sculptor, painter, actor, dancer and musician for delightful art experience.

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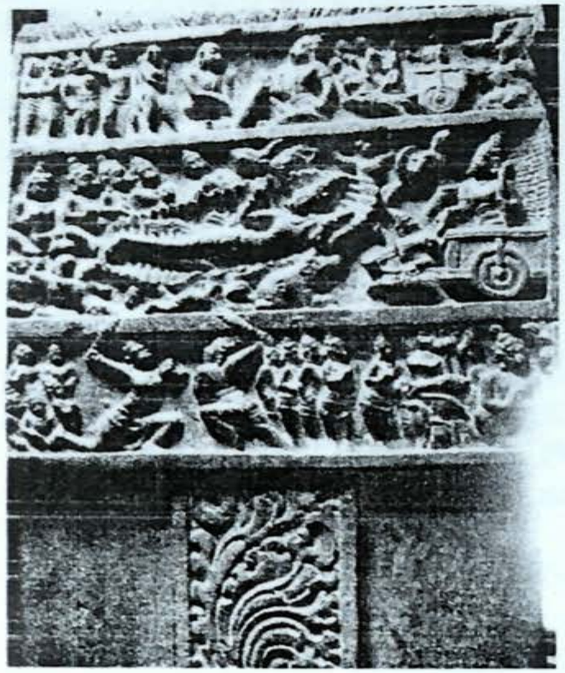
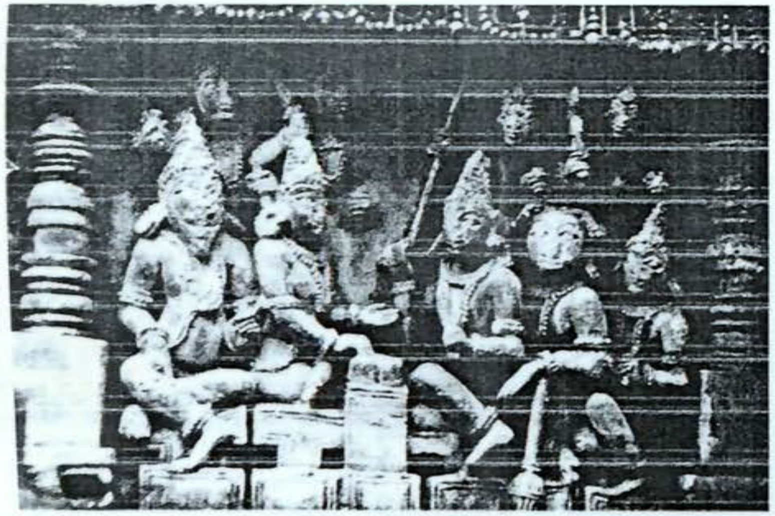
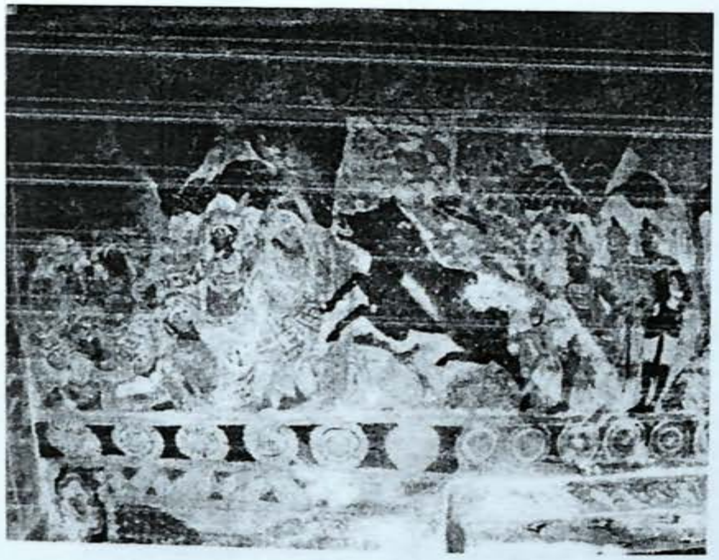
Illustrations:



1. Early Chalukya, 8th century CE, Virupaksha Temple, Pillar Details of Navaranaga, 3 Episodes illustrated
   1. Vaishampayana Narrating Mahabharata to Janamejaya
   2. Bhishma *Parva*, Bhishma lyidg on the arrows
   3. Bheema and Duryodhana on combat - Gadhayuddha

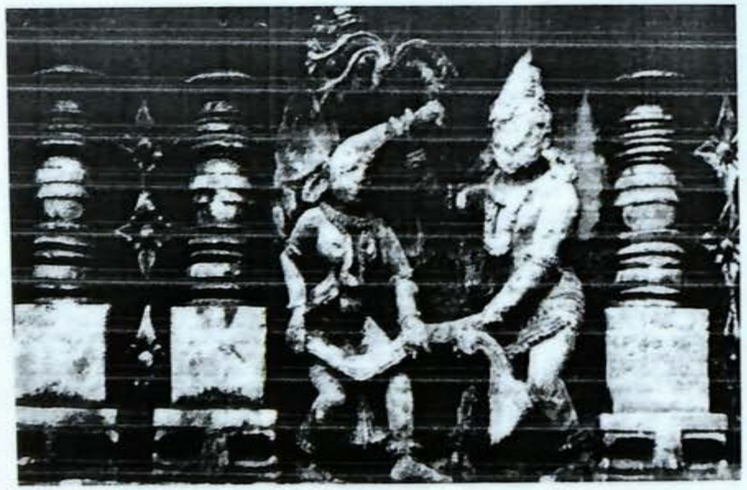
2. Hoysala, 12th century CE, Amruteshvara Temple Exterior Wall.
Depiction of *Sabha parva* Game of Dice between Pandavas and Kauravas

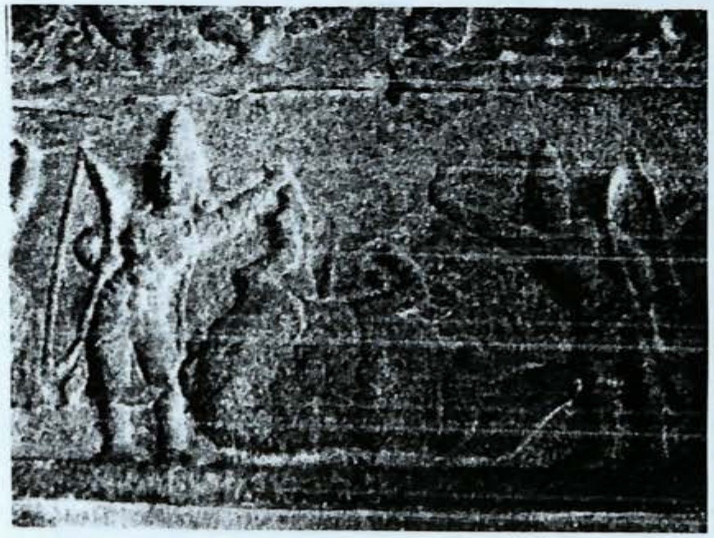




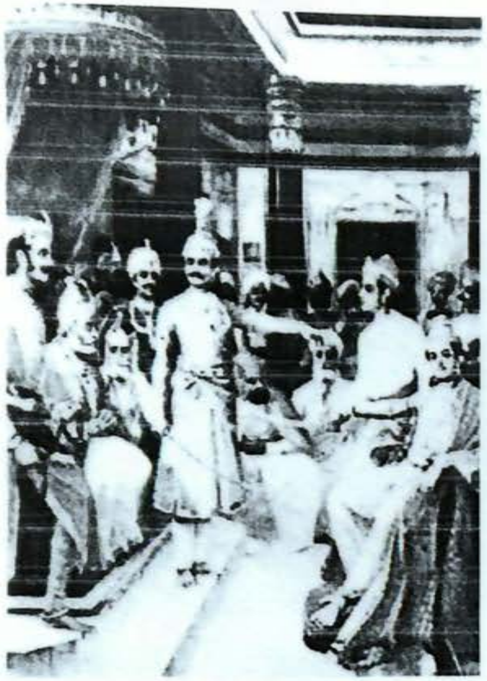
4. Post Vijayanagar, 17th century CE Virabhadreshvara Temple Lepakshi Mural Paintings Episode of *Kiratarjuniya*

3. Hoysala, 12th century CE Amruteshvara Temple Exterior wall Dushyasana disrobing Draupadi, *Vastrapaharana*



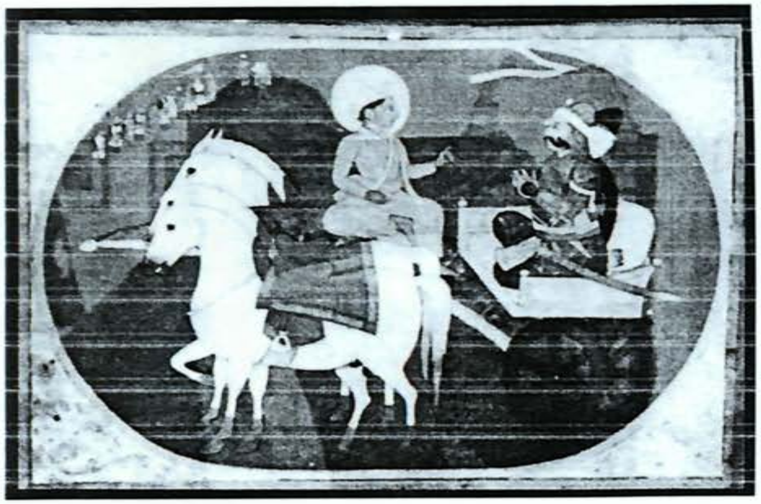


5. Vijayanagar, 16th century CE Ramachandra Temple Interior Episode of *Kiratarjuniya*

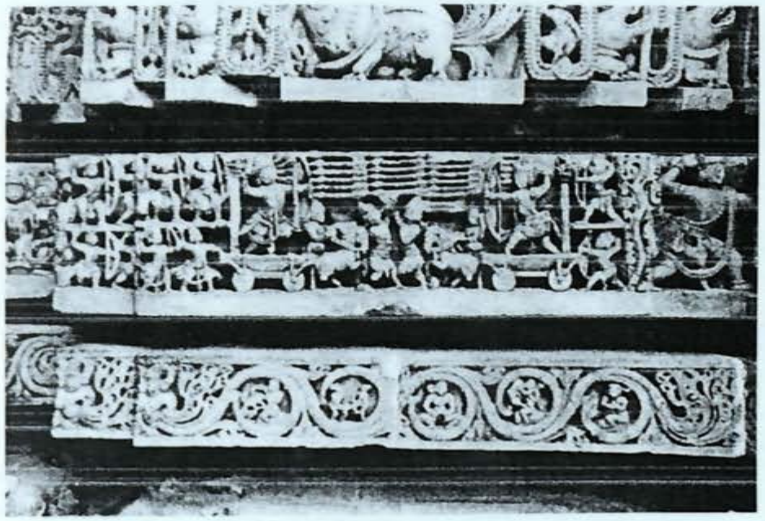


6. Painting, Raja Ravi Varma, 1906, Sri Krishna as Envoy, *Sandhi pratapa Jaganmohana Palace Mysore*

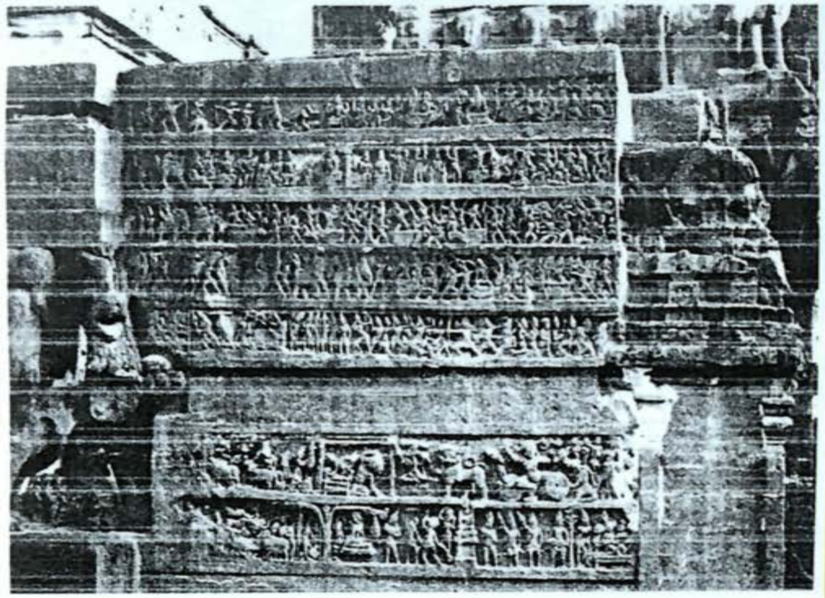
7. Kangra, Pahari Miniature, 1800-1810 A.D. **Gita Sermon** National Museum, New Delhi



8. Rashrakuta, 8th Century Kailasa Temple Exterior Wall screen depicting the Mahabharata war and Krishnaleela scene



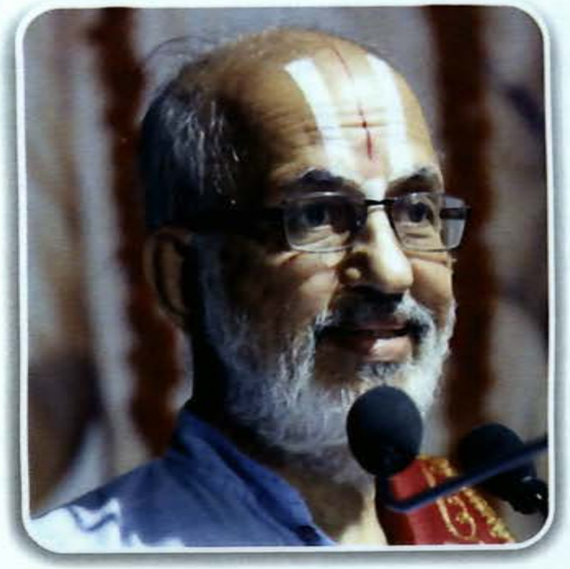
9. Hoysala, Hoysaleshvara Temple Halebidu, 12th century CE



10. Mahabharata War, Combat between Karna and Arjuna

❑

Ecology in the Mahabharata



—Dr. A. Ramaswamy Iyengar

Mahabharata is a compendium of numerous narratives containing a wide range of topics. Mahabharata offers many instructions for the preservation of ecology which is actually the spirit of dharma, - the unseen rhythm of cosmic living that sustains and supports all forms of beings in the universe. dharma upholds ethics and morality. 'यतो धर्मः ततो जयः' is the ultimate message of the Mahabharata.

Mahabharata is an educative epic created by Vyasa, also known as Krishna Dvaipayana. It is a work that has served as the bedrock of ancient Indian culture and civilization, on the lines of the Veda which forms the basis of ***dharma***.

वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलं स्मृतिशीले च तद्विदाम् ।
आचारश्चैव साधूनामात्मनस्तुष्टिरेव च ॥

> 'Entire Veda is the source of Dharma. Conscientious recollections of the virtuous persons well-versed in the Veda, the practice of the good and the learned, and the joy of one's own true conscience is also dharma.'

Mahabharata is a compendium of numerous narratives containing a wide range of topics. Mahabharata offers many instructions for the preservation of ecology which is actually the spirit of ***dharma,*** - the unseen rhythm of cosmic living that sustains and supports all forms of beings in the universe. ***dharma*** upholds ethics and morality. **'यतो धर्मः ततो जयः'** is the ultimate message of the Mahabharata. **धर्मो विश्वस्य जगतः प्रतिष्ठा** is the declaration of the Veda. It is the principle that sustains the universe. Our moral, social, economic and social conflicts get resolved if our endeavours are undertaken as per the dictates of ***dharma*** which safeguards the welfare of all beings in the cosmos.

The ***smrtis, dharmashastras***, Ramayana, Mahabharata and all the ***puranas*** depict ***dharma*** in all its myriad shades. ***dharma*** envisages that a pious life lived in tune with the course of the cosmos alone is worthy of living. Human beings have an obligation to safeguard ***dharma*** which in turn sustains life. **धर्मोरक्षति रक्षितः** is our National adage. ***dharma*** sustains the cosmic order both in its macro and micro levels. Transcendental, intellectual, transactional, cultural, economic, social, individual, pragmatic and all other aspects of enlightened living get embedded into the fabric of ***dharma***.

dharma cares for the cosmos. Issues like environmental pollution and ecological imbalance are portrayed in the Mahabharata as the consequence of the violation of ***dharma***. Mahabharata pleads for an enlightened life based on time-tested values of ***dharma***.

Conservation of ecology is basically a cultural value. Ethical concern for the surroundings is the natural endowment of a noble soul. Environmental consciousness arises out of purity of mind. Faith in ***dharma*** and its diligent practice bring about purity of mind. ***dharma*** calls for a cooperative endeavour on the part of all human beings to ensure blissful coexistence of all beings. This is overtly and covertly specified throughout the Mahabharata. Maintenance of ***dharma*** is essential for the survival of human race. Selfishness is disastrous. Arrogant political, economic and social policies lead to ecological ruin. Global warming, wildlife extinction, air, water and soil pollution etc. are the hazards brought about by ecological imbalance. These evil consequences have already started raising their ugly heads as we tend to neglect Careless usage of science and technology is detrimental to human welfare.

Irresponsible exploitation of natural resources is detrimental to the welfare of the human species. Human misdeeds pose multiple threats to Nature, as they endanger cosmic wellbeing. Vyasa, analyses the problem of human disaster in its cosmic perspective. Through many narratives called ***upakhyanas*** he draws our attention towards the cosmic significance of local incidents.

Human perceptions get sublimated if we observe Nature and learn from the interactions of natural organisms and other components. Based on the theory of the periodic creation and withdrawal of the world in a cyclic mode, Mahabharata intimately analyses the variations in the physical, chemical and biological components of Nature. It notices the gradual decline in virtue and nobility of human beings that calls for the end of a cycle of creation because that would dislocate cosmic equilibrium, As life forms constantly keep travelling, birth after birth, they bring about changes in the environment. The ignorant ones do not care for the changes in seasons, course of rivers, change in mountain ranges or weather variations.

Mahabharata looks upon Nature as a living entity pregnant with consciousness. Human being is a product of the elements of nature. Ganga is the mother of Bhishma. The sons of Pandu are born of the elements of nature. Draupadi came out of fire. How the trees of ***gandhamadhana*** mountain support life is extensively described in the Mahabharata. ***Khandavadahana*** imparts a lesson in ecology. Events like floods and famines that strain ecological balance, community events and family affairs are all delineated here in their cosmic setting. The epic provides many lessons to manage the flora and fauna, to protect the cattle, to retain purity of natural elements, to safeguard natural resources and to ensure general welfare.

The central theme of the Mahabharata revolves around a feud between two groups of people, between the noble and the wicked. It posits the good and the bad as the two eternal parts of the universe. The war of Mahabharata is fought between the good and the bad, divine and the demonic, the cohesive and the divisive forces of nature. The good is guided by ***dharma*** while the bad is driven by ego and crafty manipulations.

The dichotomy in human propensities and attitudes are exemplified through the conduct of the cousins, the ***pandavas*** and the ***kauravas***. The epic depicts how selfishness promotes imbalance and disharmony while the selflessness fosters equilibrium and harmony. The former disrupts the cosmos while the latter conserves it. Those that produce imbalance are the wicked. Those that contribute towards cosmic harmony are the good.

The Bhagavad Gita upholds the value of ecological harmony. God the Supreme indwells Nature. He identifies himself with the elements of nature like the sun, moon, ocean, mountain, wind and river. The Gita presents a fully spiritual and profound vision of Nature. It looks upon the good and the bad in the world respectively as the inheritors of ***'daivī sampat'*** and ***'āsurī sampat'***. Bhagavad Gita characterises those born with ***daivī sampat*** as follows:

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।
दयाभूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥
तेजः क्षमाधृतिश्शोचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

(Bhagavad Gita: XVI -2 -3)

(Harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peace, absence of crookedness, compassion towards beings, not greedy, tenderness, modesty, absence of vacillation, Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of mischief, absence of pride - these are the characteristics of a person born with 'daivī sampat' O! Bharata.)

The people of '***āsurī***' temperament are characterised as follows:

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥

(Bhagavad Gita: XVI -16. 4)

'Those possessing demoniac nature are characterized by hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance.'

The Gita describes those born with evil propensities thus:

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धा कामक्रोधपरायणाः।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥

(Ibid - 12)

अहङ्कार बलं दर्षं कामंक्रोधं च संश्रिताः ॥
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोभ्यसूयकाः ।

(Ibid - 18)

'Bound by a hundred bonds of desires, devoured by wrath and lust, unweariedly occupied in amassing unjust wealth which serves their own enjoyment, occupied by egoistic ideas, deluded, doing works, but doing them wrongly, acting mightily, but for themselves, for desire, for fun, working against the will of God in themselves and the universe.'

Protection of the external harmony is possible only when there is internal harmony. Anushasana Parva 111 dwells on the value of internal harmony.

प्रज्ञानं शौचमेवेह शरीरस्य विशेषतः ।
तथा निष्किञ्चनत्वं च मनसश्च प्रसन्नता ॥११॥

वृत्तशौचं मनः शौचं तीर्थशौचं परं हितम् ।
ज्ञानोत्पन्नं च यच्छौचं तच्छौचं परमं मतम् ॥१२॥

मनसाथ प्रदीपेन ब्रह्मज्ञानबलेन च ।
स्नाता ये मानसे तीर्थे तज्ज्ञाः क्षेत्रज्ञदर्शिनः ॥१३॥

समारोपितशौचस्तु नित्यं भावसमन्वितः ।
केवलं गुणसंपन्नः शुचिरेव नरः सदा ॥१४॥

Mahabharata asks us to live a life of holistic fulfilment. Human beings have a duty towards the protection of peace and harmony, not only in the domain of physical nature, but also in the psychological and the spiritual spheres. Human beings, animals and plants co-exist in Nature. Stellar bodies and the different forces in nature also form a part of this responsive universe which is an organically well-knit whole that is ever vibrant. ***'daivi sampat'*** sustains and supports the vitality of the universe. Living in deference to the wellbeing of all beings is our responsibility. Utilizing the natural resources with a sense of gratitude is our prized privilege. This is the sum and substance of ***dharma***.

Mahabharata insists on ***'sarvabhutahita'*** or 'welfare of all beings'.

हितं यत्सर्वभूतानामात्मनश्च सुखावहम् ।
तत्कुर्यादीश्वरो ह्येतन्मूलं सर्वार्थसिद्धये ॥
(Udyogaparvan 37-40)

Individuals living a selfless life with self-control is at the root of a good society. This is the secret of protecting the environment according to Vyasa. He asks how can a man who cannot organise his own life think about the welfare of the community? Individual self-contentment and internal harmony in a community is at the root of any healthy environment. One who is discontent within cannot promote balance and harmony around. Discontentment is the fundamental reason for man's disruptive tendencies. Vyāsa points out to the birds, beasts and the insects. He admires at their satisfaction with minimum wants. He appreciates their selfless love and simple fervours.

न पश्यत सुतस्नेहं यादृशः पशुपक्षिणाम् ।
न येषां धारयित्वा तान्कश्चिदस्ति फलागमः ॥
चतुष्पात्पक्षिकीटानां प्राणिनां स्नेहसङ्गिनाम् ।
परलोकगतिस्थानां मुनियज्ञक्रिया इव ॥
(Shantiparvan 149- 18,19)

Vyāsa advises us to be sensitive towards Nature. He calls upon us to keep our environment pure and clean. He condemns impurity and dirt.

अशौचं मलिनत्वं च शूद्रा ह्येते प्रकीर्तिताः
(Ashwamedhika parvan ch. 92)

He says that every form of being, living or inert, has a right to exist. Even as life is dear to the human beings, so do other forms of beings like to exist as per their destiny.

अनित्यानीह भाग्यानि चतुष्पात्पक्षिणामपि ।
जङ्गमाजङ्गमनां चाप्यायुरग्रेऽवतिष्ठते ॥
- (Shanti Parvan - 149 .52)

All forms of existence are sailing in the same boat. It is our vanity that we claim our superiority over the rest of the species. Vyasa calls upon us to remain grateful to nature and share the ~ natural resources with every form of beings to make the universe a happy place to live in. He provides a grand list of beings that go to make the universe. Even recalling their names daily is beneficial for us. I reproduce here only a few lines therefrom:

नक्षत्राण्यृतवश्चैव मासाः पक्षाः सवत्सराः।
वैनतेयाः समुद्राश्च कद्रुजाः पन्नगास्तथा ॥
शतद्रुश्च विपाशा च चन्द्रभागा सरस्वती ।
सिन्धुश्च देविका चैव प्रभासं पुष्करणि च ॥
गङ्गा महानदी वेणा कावेरी नर्मदा तथा।
कुलम्पुना विशल्या च करतोयाम्बुवाहिनी ॥
सरयूर्गण्डकी चैव लोहितश्च महानदः ।
ताम्रपर्णा वेत्रवती पर्णाशा गौतमी तथा ॥
गोदावरी च वेण्या च कृष्णवेणा तथाऽद्रिजा ।
दृषद्वती च कावेरी चक्षुर्मन्दाकिनी तथा ॥
प्रयागं च प्रभासं च पुण्यं नैमिषमेव च ।
तच्च विश्वेश्वरस्थानं यत्र तद्विमलं सरः॥
पुण्यतीर्थं सुसलिलं कुरुक्षेत्रं प्रकीर्तितम् ।

सिन्धूत्तमं तपो दानं जम्बूमार्गमथापि च ॥
हिरण्वती वितस्ता चा तथा प्लक्षवती नदी ।
वेदस्मृतिवेदवती मालवाऽथाश्ववत्यपि ॥
भूमिभागास्तथा पुण्या गङ्गाद्वारामथापि च ।
ऋषिकुल्यास्तथा मेध्या नध्यः सिन्धुवहास्तथा ॥
चर्मण्वती नदी पुण्या कौशिकी यमुना तथा।
नदी भीमरथी चैव बाहुदा च महानदी ॥

Anushasanaparvan 271 18-26

Bhagavadgītā asks us to recognize life in its cosmic setting. The concept of ***lokasangraha*** is based upon this ideal. Our powers and resources are bestowed by Nature. It is Nature that rewards us with fruits for our efforts. Our engagement with worthy enterprises equips us better to benefit more and more from nature. The gifts of Nature must be utilized by us for the welfare of Nature and for the wellbeing of the community. Even ascetics and recluses are not exempted from their obligation towards the society at large.

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥

(Bhagavad Gita 3-17)

'A person who lives for his own sake leads a futile life.' Even Sri Krishna, the supreme Divinity keeps working for the welfare of His creation.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

(Bhagavadgita 3-22)

'O Partha, there is no work I need to do in the three worlds. I am in no need of getting anything. Still-keep engaged in work.'

Adi-Parvan describes the flora and fauna and warns against indiscriminate hunting of animals. The description of the hermitage of Kanva in Shakuntala episode provides a serene picture of wellmaintained ecological balance. It highlights the cultural dimension of ecological harmony. The hunting scene where forest dwellers and the beasts encounter each other teaches the necessity of careful concern and watchful regulation. Deforestation is advised against. Bhishma advises Yudhishthira not to exploit the resources of his kingdom at the cost of his subjects' welfare. A king must be like a flower growing gardener and not like a charcoal trader. The former rears a garden, tends the plants and then collects flowers, while the latter destroys trees for his living.

मालाकारोपमो राजन्भव माङ्गारिकोपमः ।

(Shanti Parvan 72 -20)

'पुष्पं पुष्पं विचिन्वीत मूलच्छेदं न कारयेत्'

(Udyoga Parvan 34-28)

Cutting off the udder of the cow is not the way of obtaining milk.

ऊधाशिछन्ध्यातु यी धेन्वाः क्षीरार्थि न लभेत्पयः ।
एवं राष्ट्रमयोगेन पीडितं न विवर्धते ॥

Shanti Parva 72-270

On the other hand, serving the cow with reverence and enjoying its milk as the nature's gift is better.

यवसोदकमादाय सान्त्वेन विनयेन च ।
यो हि दोग्ध्रीमुपास्ते च स नित्यं विन्दते पयः । **(loc. cit.)**

Mahabharata asserts that the plants and trees possess life and the faculty of feelings. Bhrgu instructs Bharadvaja and explains the functions of plants and their sensibilities like seeing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Their sensibilities of joy and sorrow are delineated in detail.

ऊष्मतो म्लायते पर्ण त्वक्फलं पुष्पमेव च ।
म्लायते शीर्यते चापि स्पर्शस्तेनाद्य विद्यते॥
वाय्वग्न्यशनिनिर्दोषैः फलं पुष्पं विशीर्यते ।
श्रोत्रेण गृह्यते शब्दः तस्मात् शृण्वन्तिपादपाः॥
वल्ली वेष्टयते वृक्षं सर्वतश्चैवगच्छति ॥
न ह्यदृष्टेश्च मार्गोस्ति तस्मात्पश्यन्तिपादपाः ॥
पुण्यापुण्यैस्तथा गन्धैः धूपैश्चविविधैरपि ।
अरोगाः पुष्पितास्सन्ति तस्माजिघ्रन्ति पादपाः ।
पादैः सलिलपानाच्च व्याधीनां चापि दर्शनात् ।
व्याधिप्रतिक्रियत्वाच्च विद्यते रसनं द्रुम ।
वक्त्रेणोत्पलनालेव यथोर्ध्वं जलमाददेत् ॥
तथा पवन संयुक्तः पादैः पिबति पादपः ॥
सुखदुःखयोश्च ग्रहणाच्छिन्नस्य च विरोहणात् ।
जीवं पश्यामि वृक्षाणांअचैतन्यं न विद्यते ॥

(Shantiparva - 176)

Hurting plants and killing them indiscriminately is a sin. Killing or causing injury to animals is equally bad. The life of an animal and the life of a human being are of equal value. Mahabharata levies the same punishment for ruining any life.

श्ववराहखरान्हत्वा शैद्रमेव व्रतं चरत् ॥
मार्जारचाषमण्ड्कान्काकं व्यालं च मूषिकम् ॥
उक्तः पशुसमोदोषो राजान्प्राणिनिपातनात् ॥ **(ibid 165)**

No being in the universe is exclusive or separate. Mahabharata insists on treating the whole of this universe as an integral single organism. It asks us to be watchful and learn many valuable lessons from nature. A number of episodes in Mahābhārāta like the episode of शाल्मली वृक्ष and वायु in the 156th & 157th chapters of Shantiparvan or the episode of the rat, cat, mongoose and owl in the 138th chapter, or that of the frog, parrot and elephant in the 88th chapter of the Anušhāsanaparvan etc., reiterate that injury to any form of life upsets the cosmos as a whole.

A king is advised to learn from nature. A tree full of flowers does not yield fruits. Even when the fruits appear, they do so at a height not so easy to be taken by one and all. It is not easy to identify the ripe fruits for the unripe ones also may appear as ripe. Holding on till the final fruition without succumbing half way through is a lesson that a king can learn from a tree.

सुपुष्पितस्यादफलः फलितस्स्यादुरारुहः ।
अपक्वः पक्वसङ्काशः न तु शीर्यत कर्हिचित् ॥ (उद्योग–34)

A bee collecting honey is set as a model for a king to collect taxes:

यथा मधु समादत्ते रक्षन् पुष्णाणि षट्पदः ।
तद्वदर्थान् मनुष्येभ्यः आदद्यादविहिंसया ॥ (उद्योग ch. 34)

The cuckoo, the cow, the pig, the owl, the lion, the serpent, the crane and the mountains each has a valuable lesson to offer:

कोकिलस्य वराहस्य मेरोः शून्यस्य वेश्मनः ।
नटस्य भक्तिमित्रस्य यच्छ्रेयस्तत् समाचरेत् ।
बकवच्चिन्तयेदर्थान्सिंहवच्च पराक्रमेत्
वृकवच्चावलुम्पेत शरवच्च विनिष्पतेत् ॥
गृध्रदृष्टिर्बकालीनः श्वचेष्टः सिंहविक्रमः ।
अनुद्विग्नः काकशङ्की भुजङ्गचरितं चरेत् || 62 ||

(Shanti Parva - 140.24-27)

The discourse on polity in the 69th chapter of ***shantiparvan*** treats the polluting of public water source as a punishable offence. 58th chapter of the Anushasanaparvan recommends and implores to create varieties of water reservoirs.

पानीयदानं परमं दानानां मनुरब्रवीत् ।
तस्माद्वापीश्च कूपांश्च तडागानि च खानयेत् ॥३॥
अर्धं पापास्य हरति पुरुषस्येह कर्मणः ।
कूपः प्रवृत्तपानीयः सुप्रवृत्तश्च नित्यशः ॥४॥
सर्वं तारयते वंशं यस्य खाते जलाशये ।
गावः पिबन्ति विप्रश्च साधवश्च नराः सदा ॥५॥
निदाघकाले पानीयं यस्य तिष्ठत्यवारितम् ।
स दुर्गं विषमं कृच्छ्रं न कदाचिदवाप्नुते ॥६॥

Trees offer fruits and flowers. They bring rain. They provide cool shadow and shelter to all forms of beings. Planting trees is a great act of piety. Planting of trees on the shores of water reservoirs is the best way to escape from entering the hell. A son is coveted because he protects his father from the hell and so do the plants and trees planted. Trees should be treated just like the sons.

सर्वदानैर्गुरुतरं सर्वदानैर्विशिष्यते ।
पानीयं नरशार्दूल तस्माद्दातव्यमेव हि ॥२१॥
एवमेतत्तडागेषु कीर्तितं फलमुत्तमम् ।
अत ऊर्ध्वं प्रवक्ष्यामि वृक्षाणामपि रोपणे ॥२२॥
स्थावराणां च भूतानां जातयः षट्प्रकीर्तिताः।
वृक्षगुल्मलतावल्ल्यस्त्वक्सारास्तृणजातयः ॥२३॥
एता जात्यस्तु वृक्षाणां तेषां रोपे गुणास्त्विमे ।
कीर्तिश्च मानुषे लोको प्रेत्य चैव फलं शुभम् ॥२४॥
लभते नाम लोको च पितृभिश्च महीयते।
देवलोकगतस्यापि नाम तस्य न नश्यति ॥२५॥
अतीतानागते चोभे पितृवंशं च भारत ।
तारयेद्वृक्षरोपी च तस्माद्वृक्षान्प्ररोपयेत् ॥२६॥
तस्य पुत्रा भवन्त्येते पादपा नात्र संशयः ।
परलोकगतः स्वर्गं लोकाश्चाप्नोति सो व्ययान् ॥२७॥
पुष्पैः सुरगणान्वृक्षाः फ्लैश्चापि तथा पितृन् ।
छायया चातिथींस्तात पूजयन्ति महीरुहाः ॥२८॥
किंनरोरगरक्षांसि देवगन्धर्वमानवाः ।
तथा ऋषिगणाश्चैव संश्रयन्ति महीरुहान् ॥२९॥
पुष्पिताः फलवन्तश्च तर्पयन्तीह मानवान् ।
वृक्षदं पुत्रवद्वृक्षास्तारयन्ति परत्र च ॥३०॥
तस्मात्तडागे वृक्षा वै रोप्याः श्रेयोर्थिना सदा ।
पुत्रवत्परिपाल्याश्च पुत्रास्ते धर्मतः स्मृताः ॥३१॥
तडागकृद्वृक्षरोपी इष्टयज्ञश्च यो द्विजः।
एते स्वर्गे महीयन्ते ये चान्ये सत्यवादिनः ॥३२॥
तस्मात्तडागं कुर्वीत आरामांश्चैव रोपयेत् ।
यजेच्चविविधैर्यज्ञैः सत्यं च सततं वदेत् ||33||

Anushasana parva 99th chapter

Sri Krishna's instruction to Sanjaya in the 29th chapter of Udyogaparvan provides a rare insight into the philosophy of ecological balance in Nature. He says that the peaceful coexistence of the Pandavās and the Kauravās is as necessary for the welfare of both as the coexistence of wild beasts and the forest. The presence of wild beasts protects the forest from being destroyed by the people, while the forest protects the wild beasts to live in its interiors in peace.

वनं राजा धृतराष्ट्रः सपुत्रो व्याघ्रास्ते वै सञ्जय पाण्डुपुत्रा :
(Udyogaparvan 37-41)
सिंहैर्विहीनं हि वनं विनश्येत् सिंहा क्निश्येयुश्च ऋते वनेन ॥
(Udyoga Parva 37 - 60)

Sin is the main disruptive force that causes ecological imbalance. Evil raises its ugly head because of human sinning. Why and how does this happen? Kashyapa's advice to Pururavas contains answers to this question:

पापैः पापे क्रियमाणो हि चैल ततो रुद्रो जायते देव एषः ।
पापैः पापा सञ्जनयन्ति रुद्रं ततस्सर्वान्साध्वसाधून्हिनस्ति ॥
यथैकहे जातवेदाः प्रदीप्तः कृत्स्नं ग्रामं दहते चत्वरं वा ।
विमोहनं कुरुते देव एष ततस्सर्वं स्पृश्यते पुण्यपापैः ॥
Shanti Parva 74-17

If an individual or a small section of the community gets discontent and starts grabbing more and more for selfish reasons it starts indulging in disruptive activities. Then the whole community would eventually be ruined even as the fire started somewhere in some house corner would destroy the whole town, if unchecked. Curbing such activities that foster disharmony and imbalance in Nature is the duty of every citizen in a civilised society. Every citizen must realize that the whole community will have to face the wrath of Nature, irrespective of who started it or who indulges in it.

असन्त्यागात्पापकृतामपापां स्तुपुल्यो दण्डः स्पृशते मिश्रभावात् ॥
शुष्केणाद्रै दह्यते मिश्रभावात् न मिश्रः स्यात्पापकृद्भिः कथञ्चित् ॥
(loc. cit)

Preservation of ecological balance in Nature is for the good of all. One must strive for the good of all and undertake only such activities that promote universal happiness. Whatever promotes this cause is Dharma. A wise man has to use his discrimination and find out what is ***dharma*** and what is ***adharma*** on the basis of this philosophy.

लोकयात्रामिहकेतु धर्मं प्राहुर्मनीषिण :।
समुद्दिष्टं सतां धर्म स्वयमूहेत पण्डितः ॥
(Shanti parvan -Ch. 142)

Everyone loves to live. Everyone wants to be happy. None likes to suffer sorrow.

सर्वस्य दयिताः प्राणा सर्वस्य दयितास्सुखाः ।
दुःखादुद्विजते सर्वः सर्वस्य सुखमीप्सितम् ॥
(Shanti parvan Ch. 139)

Let us strive towards understanding ***dharma***. Let us live as per its codes. This alone is the way to keep everyone happy. ❑

Some Female Characters of Mahabharata-Menaka, Sakuntala, Draupadi, Gandhari

—**Dr. Ved Kumari Ghai**

Sabhava Parva of Ādiparva of Mahābharata- there occur stories of sage Viśvāmitra and fairy Menakā and of king Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā. Indra, being afraid of Viśvāmitra's penance, sends Menakā to seduce him so as to deviate him from penance. She seeks help of Kāmadeva and other gods and goes to his hermitage in spring. Through her songs and dances, she is successful in attracting the sage and lives with him as his wife. She gives birth to a girl child. Viśvāmitra, realizing his blunder, leaves the hermitage and goes to some unknown place.

In Sabhava Parva of Ādiparva of Mahābharata- there occur stories of sage Viśvāmitra and fairy Menakā and of king Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā. Indra, being afraid of Viśvāmitra's penance, sends Menakā to seduce him so as to deviate him from penance. She seeks help of Kāmadeva and other gods and goes to his hermitage in spring. Through her songs and dances, she is successful in attracting the sage and lives with him as his wife. She gives birth to a girl child. Viśvāmitra, realizing his blunder, leaves the hermitage and goes to some unknown place. Menakā also goes back to Indrasabhā, leaving the girl- child in that forest. The birds come near the child and protect her. Kaṇva after getting information about girl-child lying in the forest, adopts her as his daughter. He names her as Śakuntalā as she was protected in the forest by birds. She grows up there in Kaṇva's hermitage and is given proper education also.

Once King Duṣyanta visits the hermitage to pay respects to sage Kaṇva. The sage is not in the hermitage at that time, so Śakuntalā attends him. Duṣyanta feeling himself attracted by her, asks her as to how is she the daughter of sage Kaṇva as the sage has been Brahmachāri throughout his life. He further points out that the fact that my mind was attracted by you indicates that you are a Kṣatriya girl. I being a girl Kṣatriya king cannot feel attracted by a Brahmaṇa girl. Śakuntalā then relates to him the story of her birth from the heavenly fairy Menakā who by the order of Indra, lived with Kaṇva sage Viśvamitra and gave birth to her. As she had gone back leaving her in the forest, the sage Kaṇva has reared her as his daughter. He named her Śakuntalā as she was protected in the forest by birds. The sage is not in the hermitage at this time, When he comes back, Duṣyanta should pray to him for her hand. Duṣyanta explains to her eight forms of marriage out of which Gandharva and Raksasa forms are prescribed for Kṣatriyas. He asks her to marry him even in the absence of his father Kaṇva. She agrees to marry him on this condition that the son born to her will be made the crown prince, Duṣyanta agrees and both are married through Gandharva form of marriage. Duṣyanta goes backs to his kingdom promising to call her soon. He however does not send anybody to fetch her. Śakuntalā tells the whole episode to her father Kaṇva and requests him to give Abhayadana to King Duṣyanta and his family. Kaṇva approves this marriage and gives her blessings that her son will rule over the whole earth. Śakuntalā keeps on waiting for Duṣyanta's soldiers who will be sent to take her along but Duṣyanta does not send anybody. After some months she gives birth to a male child. The gods throw flowers over him and Indra announces that Śakuntalā's son will be cakravarti king. He will perform many sacrifices like Vajapeya Rajasuya etc.,when no one comes from Duṣyanta's Rajasabha to take Śakuntalā, then Śakuntalā herself takes her son Sarvadamana to the court of King Duṣyanta, so that he is declared crown prince as was promised by Duṣyanta in the hermitage of sage Kaṇva. Duṣyanta remembers the whole episode but declares that he does not recognize her. Śakuntalā is highly surprised to see such attitude of the king. She however controls her anger and asks the King to speak the truth and not untruth like an ordinary person. She says- Truth is most powerful- than one thousand Asvamedha sacrifices. O King! You should not be untruthfull and ignore your promise. If you are ignoring - the truth, there is no sense in my stay here. I am going ; As regards the son, the voice, face etc., are like, those of his father. So I leave him here, Mahendra has pronounced it my son will be cakravarti King. Saying that Śakuntalā intends to go back. At that time there is announcement from - the gods that Śakuntalā is wife of Duṣyanta and Sarvadamana is their son. Then Duṣyanta embraces his son and gets joy. He honours Śakuntalā also with ornaments and clothes. He approaches her mother and tells her that her daughter in law is the daughter of sage Viśvāmitra and fairy Menakā and has been reared by sage Kaṇva. He requests her to accept both of them with pleasure. The mother embraces her grandson Sarvadamana also Śakuntalā who touches her feet.

Draupadī

Towards the end of the Mahābharata war when Draupadī is waiting for the information of the victory of the Pāṇdavas, she gets information from Kṛṣna - that her all five sons have been killed by Aśvathāmā when they were sleeping. Draupadī is full of anger on knowing this. She asks Bhima to find out Aśvathāmā and bring his man after killing him. Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva go and bring Aśvathāmā so as to kill him in the presence of Draupadī. Yudhiṣthira does not want to kill him as he is guruputra and Brahmana but Kṛṣna says that he has committed such a crime for which he should get death penalty. Aśvathāmā himself says that he has taken revenge of his father's killing and now he may be killed to make his mother sonless just like Draupadī who has been made sonless by him. Draupadī's motherly feelings are aroused and she says that she does not want Krpī to be sonless like herself. Aśvathāmā then says to Draupadī- Mother! I pray that I should be killed. Draupadī tells him - that as he has called her mother, she feels that she has got avengement which has satisfied her.

The writer of this paper while recreating these female characters like Menakā, Gāndhārī etc., has introduced some special features not found in the Mahābharata.

Recreated in the play Menakāvatsalyam, Menakā is deceived by Viśvāmitra who leaves her in the forest when she is in family- way as he does not find himself able to bear - the responsibility as father of their child. Menakā gives birth to a girl child with the help of forest gods and there after goes to the hermitage of Kaṇva to seek his help. She has to go back to Indrasabha, but she does not want her daughter to be a dance girl like her. Her desire is that her daughter be properly educated and married and for this purpose she goes to the hermitage of Kaṇva. She relates to him that sage Viśvāmitra left her when she was in family-way and did not accept the responsibility as a husband and as a father. He asked me to go to Indraloka but if my daughter stays with me, she will like me, be a dancing girl serving Indra and Jayanta. I do not want her to follow my path. She should get proper education here and then be married. Kaṇva says that the child is very small, then Gautami accepts her as her daughter and says that Menakā should bring her after six months. Menakā accepts this and leaves the child with Gautami after six months. She also accepts - this condition - that she will not again come to Kaṇva's hermitage and will not disclose herself as her mother. She however tries to get information about her daughter through Sānumati. Sānumati informs her that Śakuntalā is getting education properly in Gurukula. After some months Sānumati sends Śakuntalā sends Sāradvata to Menakā. He informs that the king of Hastinapura had come to hermitage and married Śakuntalā through Gandharva system of marriage. He went back to his kingdom and promised to send his soldiers soon to take Śakuntalā to his kingdom. However he did not send anybody, Kulaguru - then sent Śakuntalā with Gautami, Śāradvata and Śārangana to Duṣyanta's Rajasabha. Duṣyanta however declared that he did not recognize her and had not married her. Śakuntalā was desperate and cried. Your friend Sānumati had come there and took Śakuntalā to the hermitage of sage Marica. She sent Śāradvata to Indraloka to inform Menakā about the whole episode and take some steps through Indra and his son Jayanta in this matter. Śakuntalā's son Sarvadamana's Raksāsūtra had fallen on the ground which was piched up by Duṣyanta. When he told him that my mother and father only could pick up that Raksasutra, then he was pleased and embraced the son. He came with him and touched the feet of Śakuntalā saying that she should give him pardon. Now both are listening to the lecture of Kulaguru. Menakā was pleased much and asked Sarvadamana to go to his parents. She herself started making arrangements for the departure of Śakuntalā to her in law's home.

In the play Gāndhārya Upadeśah, it is stated that 'Gāndhārī after her marriage with Dhṛtarastra who was blind, had willingly made herself blind by placing black cloth on her eyes. She got praise for this action of accepting blindness to make herself like, her husband. But she could not look after her children properly and had to leave this job to the servants. The result was that her son Suyodhana (Duryodhana) did not obey his father. He did not agree to his father's suggestion to give at least five villages to five Pāṇḍavas to avoid struggle between the Kauravas and the Pāṇdavas. Duryodhana says that he is not ready to give - them control over even a little land which can be occupied by a needle. Gāndhārī is depressed when Duryodhana rejects his father's suggestion and she says-May there be victory for those who follow Dharma.

There are many other female characters like Kuntī, Mādrī, Ambā. Ambika, Ambālika etc., in the Mahābharata, but the writer of this paper has described these four characters Menakā, Śakuntalā, Draupadī and Gāndhārī only to indicate features of female characters. Śakuntalā appears mainly as a daughter, Draupadī and Menakā as mothers and Gāndhārī as a faithfull wife, Purandhri Pañcakam- a collection of my five plays illustrates these features of female characters. The last play Drākśāmataḥ Śakuntalā indicates the influence of Kalidasa on writers of other countries. Drachmann a poet of Denmark had left his pregnant wife but could never forget her. I conclude this paper with his poem Śakuntalā which he wrote after seeing staging of Abhijnana Śakuntalām.

उत्कदोत्कण्ठया स्वपितुं नाशवनम् पाटल संसर्ग सुरभिवनवाता
भामषपृशन् कम गावरभार्गात् तीव्रसुगन्धप्रताद्रोल प्राविशत भयाश्रत:
उच्चदेवदारुकतक मद्यात् । आगच्छन् मधु संगीतध्वनि: यत्रादि
कियतं चलितं गतं मया तत्र सर्वत्र मत्कण्पिथे एक एव स्वर:
आयत: शकुन्तला शकुन्तला शकुन्तला ।

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myths and legends of the mahabharata *

—Prof. Sridhar M.K

This paper discusses about the Myths and Legends of the Mahabharata from Indian and western stand points. It brings out the essence of the Epic through the illustrations and tales where the concepts of four-fold values of life are emphazied and how the everlasting values of the Vedas were represented through myths and legends. It elaborates on the purpose of studying the Mahabharata for individual and societal progress. The paper also enlists the recurrent motifs present in those myths and legends and compares them with myths and legends of several ancient civilizations of the world.

Abstract:

This paper discusses about the Myths and Legends of the Mahabharata from Indian and western stand points. It brings out the essence of the Epic through the illustrations and tales where the concepts of four- fold values of life are emphazied and how the everlasting values of the Vedas were represented through myths and legends. It elaborates on the purpose of studying the Mahabharata for individual and societal progress. The paper also enlists the recurrent motifs present in those myths and legends and compares them with myths and legends of several ancient civilizations of the world. It gives a holistic view of the Indian Epic which is more relevant now.

Key words: Culture, Dharma, Legend, Mahabharata, Motif, Myth.

Introduction:

Mahabharata is an epic or a saga dealing with the origin, evolution and decay of lunar race. The main story deals with the clash of Kauravas and Pandavas, battle of wits between them and ending up in a fratricidal war. The main story takes with its under current umpteen myths, legends, customs, practices, traditions, beliefs prevailing in those times and thus became a treatise of dharma in addition to being a work of art. The Mahabharata illustrates the Indian view that any work of art must be didactic and not merely entertaining in nature. The main purpose of a poetry according to Rhetorician Mammata is to impart knowledge and give advice in the manner of a wife or beloved (*Kantasamhitatayopadesha yuje – Kavyaprakasha* I -8) .

The Mahabharata is an earliest *Itihasa* or history available to us. It reveals the ethical side of man's nature and the objective of life is fulfilled through the performance of duties formulated by the Vedas. The concept of righteousness is elucidated through a number of myths, legends, parables, narratives and tales. Vedavyasa declares that the Mahabharata deals with *dharma* (righteous value), *artha* (economic value), *kama* (emotional value) and *moksha* (spiritual value).

They are considered as *purusharthas* or four- fold values of human existence. One can attain *moksha* or salvation by pursuing *artha*, *kama* in the frame work of *dharma* (*Dharme cha arthe cha kame cha mokshe cha bharatarshabha* I M. Bh.).

The word dharma is derived from the root of the Sanskrit verb *dhru* meaning sustenance. The verb *dhru* denotes sustenance and nourishment (*Dudhayai dharana poshanayoho* I). V. S. Apte gives several shades of meanings for the word such as 1) religion, customary observance of a caste, sect etc., 2) law, usage, practice, custom, ordinance, statute 3) religious or moral merit, virtue, righteousness, good works 4) duty, prescribed code of conduct 5) right, justice, equity, impartiality 6) piety, propriety, decorum 7) morality, ethics 8) nature, disposition, character 9) an essential quality, peculiarity, attribute 10) manner, resemblance, likeness 11) a sacrifice 12) good company, associating with the virtuous 13) devotion, religious abstraction 14) manner, mode 15) an Upanishad.

(Justice Dr. M. Rama Jois (b) calls the Mahabharata as *Manava Kartavya Shastra* (code of duties of human beings) and explains that "*Dharma embraces every type of righteous conduct covering every aspect of life essential for the sustenance and welfare of the individual and society and includes those rules which guide and enable those who believe in God and heaven to attain moksha (eternal bliss). The supreme court of Bharat has reiterated this view in Ramesh Yeshwant prabhoo case (AIR 1996 S.C. III 3 paras 32-45) and in A.S. Narayana Dixitulu (1996 (9) SCC 548 at Paras 59-79).*

Definitions of Myths and Legends :

Myths deal with the fabulous accounts of Gods, Goddesses and Demons. They are termed sacred and are generally associated with a ritual. According to Malinowski "Myths can be cited as an authority on questions of religious belief and ritual procedure". They generally represent the collective mentality of an age and as a survival of earlier social forms as opined by Andrew Lang, an anthropologist. According to Joseph Campbell, epic romance and tragedy springs from myths. They touch the deepest desires of man, his fears, hopes, passions and sentiments. E. B. Tylor stressed on the philological and allegorical interpretations of myths. C.G. Jung, a renowned psychologist interpreted Myths as allegories of physical processes and for him they represented the collective mentality of an age. Mircea Eliade traced the ontological (the doctrine of Being) roots in myths. For Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, myth was a two way mirror in which ritual and philosophy regarded one another.

Whereas the legends gave a truthful account of the past and were secular (worldly) in outlook. They described the saga of heroes and heroines. The characters were kings, queens and a few dynamic persons in a community. Samuel Butler Coleridge coined the word Saga depicting the daring exploits of heroes in 1612 BC (His poem '*The saga of an Ancient Mariner*' is very popular, the world over). Although words such as myths and legends were introduced to the Indian soil by European Indologists 200 years ago, the concept was not so new to the ancient Indian writers.

Myths and Legends in the Indian Tradition:

Myth was called *Purana* (Ancient lore or mythology) and legend was called *Itihasa* (History). *Yaska*, a sage and etymologist of the Vedic words, employs the word *Itihasa* in his book on Vedic etymology (*Nirukta*). *Chanakya*, the author of a book on Indian polity (*Artha shastra*) gives a list of topics related with the History. They were old myths (*purana*), narration (*Akhyayika*) parables or illustrative tales (*Udaharana*) political science (*Artha Shastra*) and code of law (*Dharma Shastra*). In fact, the oral tradition of legends existed during the Vedic period and continued in the successive phases. The famous myths of the Vedic period were that of *Indra* (God of war/Rains), *Agni* (God of Fire), *Varuna* (God of Cosmic Order), *Yama* (God of Death) The major legends of the Vedas were that of *Urvashi* & *Pururavas*, *Indra* and *Ahalya* (Wife of sage *Gautama*), *Chyavana* and *Agastya*, the sages, the Flood legend of Manu (progenitor of Human race), *Shunashepha* etc., These myths and legends of the Vedas percolated into the Puranic and epic literature with some corruption, additions and deletions over several centuries.

Myths of Mahabharata :

Mahabharata (in short *Bharata*) an epic consisting of one hundred thousand verses is a vast repository of myths and legends. The Creation myth (*Adi parva* Chapters (Ch.) 60-69), Serpent myths (*Adi Parva* Ch. 20 -35), the myth of the churning of the milky ocean (*Adi Parva* Ch.18 -19), myths of two demon brothers (*Adi Parva* Ch. 206-211), myth of the end of *Kali* age (*Vana Parva* Ch. 187), myths associated with the births of *Skanda*, son of Shiva and Parvati (*Sabha Parva* Ch. 213, 31 -52 verses), *Satyavati* (*Adi Parva* Ch. 57 verses 35-39), *Shantanu,* myth of Nahusha, a demon king draw our attention.

Legends of Bharata :

The legends appearing in the epic are :-The legends of King *Pururavas* and *Urvashi* (*Adi parva,* Ch. 75), of *Ahalya* and *Indra*, legends concerning the river *Sarasvati* (*Ahalya Parva* Ch. 38), Legendary tales of *Chyavana* and *Agastya* (*Adi parva,* Ch. 5-7), *Dushyanta- Shakuntala* (*Adi Parva,* Ch. 2-69), of *Nala – Damayanti* (*Vana Parva*, Ch. 46-77), of *Savitri* - *Satyavan* (*Aranya Parva* Ch. 292-298) and umpteen legends of several kings, queens and sages depicting the rise and fall of their personal lives.

Purpose of Bharata Studies :

A study of the myths and legends of Bharata denotes

a) the mutation of thoughts occurring form the Vedic to the Puranic periods and reveal the socio-cultural, religious changes experienced by ancient Indians. We learn that

b) the myths are a relic of ancient customs, rituals, beliefs practiced by epic people and c) they are symbolic of a natural phenomena codified in an allegorical manner d) They represent the turbulent dance of basic human emotions as experienced by the ancients under various contexts and predicaments.

e) They guide the mankind for leading a healthy and ethical life.

f) The legends of Mahabharata comprising of several kings and queens emphasize the institution of marriage (*Vivaha*)

g) They give premonition to people regarding the immoral ways of life and their dire consequences reinforced by several illustrations and advice the readers for an ethical life.

Myths and Legends of the West and the Mahabharata -A comparison:

It is amazing to note that the parallels in the myths and legends of the *Mahabharata* are found in the ancient civilizations of the world. The Greek, Roman, Babylonian, Egyptian, Inca Peru, North American, Mexican, Irish, Germanic, New Zealand, Japanese, Chinese, Iranian and other civilizations and Bible have recorded the same patterns of myths and legends with recurrent motifs in their sacred or mythical books.

The creation myth, serpent myths, myths connected with the god of Fire (*Agni*), the end of the *Kali* age, clash of *Indra* (Vedic war god) - *Vritra* (Demon and enemy of *Indra*), of *Yama* (God of Death), Description of the Hell, myths related to *Rudra* (God of animals) appearing in *Bharata* have parallel accounts in the books of the civilizations listed above.

In the same way, the Flood legend of *Manu* (Progenitor of the Human race), legend of *Indra* - *Ahalya* (wife of Sage *Gautama*), Legends of *Pururavas* (King of *Hastinavati*) and *Urvashi* (a divine nymph), *Dushyanta* (King of *Hastinavati*)-*Shakuntala* (Foster daughter of sage *Kanva*), *Nala* (King of Nishadha) - *Damayanti* (Princess of *Kaundinapura*), *Savitri* (Princess)- *Satyavan*, Fertility accounts of *Shantanu* (Father of *Bhishma*)-Ganges, *Satyavati* (wife of *Shantanu*)-*Uparichara* (a king), Incidents leading to the abandonment of *Bhishma* (Great Grandfather of *Kauravas* and P*andavas*), *Karna* (son of *Kunti* -Sun), *Ruru* (son of a nymph and sage), Birth of *Draupadi* (wife of *Pandavas*), tales of the inexhaustible copper bowl (*Akshaya patra*) have parallel accounts in the legends of the ancient civilizations, with slight modifications for catering to the native fervor and flavor.

The motifs in these myths and legends :

The recurrent motifs found in the myths of the *Bharata* and that of the western literatures are as follows:-

1) Fertility 2) Animism 3) Symmetry and asymmetry 4) Concealment 5) Revenge 6) Filling and Emptying 7) Transfer 8) Abandonment 8) Dismemberment 9) Metamorphosis 10) Death and prophesy 11) Magical conflict, and many more. The recurrent motifs found in the legends of *Bharata* and in some other civilizations are:-1) Expansion and immortality 2) Upsurgence of basic human emotions 3) Chastity 4) Nudity taboo 5) Contest 6) Recognition of a person among identical companions 7) Diametrical opposition, and many more.

Observations of Scholars :

(1) Indologists and anthropologists such as Max Mueller, George Cox, John Fisk, Donald A Mackenzie, Count Angelo De Gubernatis, R. N. Dandekar and U.P. Arora argue that the ancestors of Indo-Europeans who had their original home land in the Baulk region of Russia were a nomadic tribe and moved from one place to another carrying with them the original folk tales resulting in similar accounts all over the world.

(2) The renowned Indologist John Hopkins opined that the Indian myths were restructured after the advent of Greeks in India during 350 BCE. He further argued that the Greek gods and goddesses found their way into the Indian art, numismatics, architecture etc., He cites the incidents of fatal ring in *Ramayana* and "*Shakuntala*" legend, the modified version of the tale of Trojan horse in the Indian tale of *Udayana* as examples for the inter-mixing of the tales and cultures from the East and West.

(3) The contemporary comparative philologists while examining the multifarious languages of Asia, Europe and other continents floated a theory that all these diverse languages are thought to have been derived from a common ancestral language called as 'Proto-Indo-European language' and hence parallel myths could be found in ancient civilizations. Contemporary archeologist Colin Renfrew opines that these Proto-Indo – Europeans were settled in Anatolia (Modern Turkey) in 8th or 7th Millennium BCE and migrated to different parts of the world disseminating with them the existing folk tales. David Frawley, George Feuerstein and Subhash Kak has this to say: "We would like to

suggest that many westerners, today are able to enthusiastically respond to India's wisdom precisely because they carry deep within themselves something of the archetypal symbolism that marks the Vedic or Hindu Spirituality[1]".

Myths and Legends of Mahabharata- A Holistic View:

1. Creation myth, Samudra mathana myth, Myth of the end of Kali age, Tripura dahana myth represented our ancestors' natural quest and desire to have a clear explanation of their environment, the origin, evolution and annihilation of the universe, the functions and the inter-relationships of the various limbs of Mother Nature such as the sun, moon, stars, rains, floods, drought, epidemic diseases, etc. Thus the Mahabharata myths incorporate India's most ancient scientific thoughts and actions.

2. The myths of the Mahabharata serve the teleological purpose of a traditional Indian. The myths deal with the first cause of the universe and the ways and means to achieve them. Thus it has set its goal on salvation or deliverance that could be attained by a person through a series of rites and duties. Hence the myths are narrated in a symbolic way.

3. As the Vedic commentators nay, the Mahabharata style itself has an *Itihasa* in a number of passages because, according to them, any legend relating to vedic gods, is known as *Itihasa* in Vedic literature.

   Thus it serves the purpose of history. It records the origin, evolution and decay of the earliest races prevailing in the Indian soil during that period.

4. The legends of Urvashi and Pururavas, of Ahalya, Rishyasringa, Dushyanta -Shakuntala, Nala - Damayanti, Savitri-Satyavan etc., provides an expression for the basic emotion of love and the sublimity of love. The Legend of Arundhati, creation myth, myths of Indra, includes love between a man and a woman, between parents and their children, love of the human being by the supreme spirit and the love of the man towards god.

   Finally, it encompasses the entire creation, the animate and the inanimate.

5. The various myths of the Mahabharata in particular and the Bhagavadgita in general symbolizes an inward study. A psychological study for attaining self-realization and for obtaining detachment from all the worldly attachments. This paves the way for salvation. Hence it can be seen that all the myths in the epic have symbols and they deal with the study of man in detail.

6. The various myths that have piled up around the figures of Indra, Vishnu, Krishna, Shiva, Ganges, reveal the unlimited capacity of the divine and the semi-divine beings and teach us the nobility of man. The various fascinating accounts accumulated around the legendary figures such as the Pandavas,

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[1] David Frawley, George Feuerstein and Subhash Kak, *In search of the Cradle of Civilization* pp. 265.

Agastya, Cyavana, Arundhati, establish the extraordinary powers of man and woman and the ways & means of attaining the same through rites and duties.

7. The legends of Manu, Urvashi - Pururavas, Agastya, serpent myths, Myths of Indra, Agni and Siva, etc., gives us lot of entertainment and in these myths and tales, one can see a mirror-image of his own joys and sorrows, hopes and dismays, merit and demerits, courage and fear, etc. Thus these myths and legends satisfy the Id, ego and the superego aspects of the mind. These myths and legends of the Mahabharata have paved the way for the development of second generation literature, fictional literature and folk literature.

8. The myths and legends of the Mahabharata may denote the customs, rituals, beliefs, rites and practices prevailing in the epic period or even to an earlier date. Thus it becomes an important document for studying the cultural anthropology of a race or of a nation.

9. The myths of the Vedas, Puranas and the epics were generally interpreted from an individualistic point of view by the western scholars, as observed by their studies. This view holds good in some cases but not in all. Whereas these myths of India have an all pervasive view. Thus Indian ethos since the Vedic times and through the epic, puranic and classic ages runs uninterrupted, un truncated and unprecedented with its catholic view enlightening the people of various aeons and enriching their lives. This is a unique nature of the Indian myths.

10. One is surprised to find a striking similarity between some of the myths and legends of India with that of the ancient civilizations of the world, such as the Greek, Celtic, Roman, Hittite, Babylonian, Mesopotamian and Egyptian. Perhaps the same thinking process worked behind these myths, legends and folk tales belonging to other civilizations. There might have been an exchange of idea or thought, folk tales, myths and legends between the aborigines of both east and the west in the remote past resulting in a matchless similarity between the corpus of eastern and western mythologies.

11. The Indian mythmakers might have created a number of myths and stories to reveal and emphasize the eternal truth (*nityasatyata*) when they visualized through either experience or introspection or by observation. Although the myths may be seemingly unreal, it does contain an inner reality of eternal truth.

12. The mythical and the legendary figures of the Mahabharata have adorned a place of pride in the temples, sculptures and the paintings of India. They have percolated into the vast body of Indian literature, ancient and modern. They have inspired many a people from various walks of life for a better living. Hence a study of the myths and legends serves the purpose of architecture, art and culture.

In total, the myths and legends of the Mahabharata in particular and the Indian mythology in general drives an Indian to explore the frontiers of science, religion, history, philosophy, psychology, heroism, art, architecture, love and sex. It serves as a primordial and a lucid step in knowing the everlasting culture of Mahabharata in a holistic way.

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ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು

—ಡಾ॥ ಸಂಧ್ಯಾ ಹೆಗಡೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಕಲಾಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲತೆಯ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಅದರದ್ದೇ ಆದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಸ್ಥಾನವಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿರುವ 'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ' ಪ್ರಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯದ ನಾವೀನ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ತಾನೂ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ ಇತರರಿಗೂ ಅದರ ರುಚಿಯನ್ನು ಉಣಬಡಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಅದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸಲ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗೊಂಡರೂ ಆಧುನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನೋ, ರಾಮಾಯಣವನ್ನೋ ಜನರಿಗೆ ತಲುಪಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. 'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ' ಯಥೇಚ್ಛವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳನ್ನು ತನ್ನ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ, ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ.

ಎಂದೋ ಕೇಳಿದ ಕಥೆಯೊಂದು ನೆನಪಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ ಕಾಡನ್ನು ನೋಡಲು ಹೋದ. ಕಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸುತ್ತಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ಹುಲಿ, ಸಿಂಹದಂತಹ ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳು ಅಟ್ಟಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದವು. ಅದರಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗಲು ಆತ ಜೋರಾಗಿ ಓಡತೊಡಗಿದ. ಓಡಿ, ಓಡಿ ಸುಸ್ತಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ದೂರದಲ್ಲೊಂದು ಬೇಲಿ ಹಾಕಿರುವ ಜಾಗ ಕಂಡಿತು. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾರದ್ದೋ ಮನೆಯಿರಬಹುದು, ತನಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ರಕ್ಷಣೆ ಸಿಗಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಮಹದಾಸೆಯಿಂದ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಹೋದ. ಅಲ್ಲೊಬ್ಬಳು ಹೆಂಗಸು ನಿಂತಿದ್ದಳು. ಹತ್ತಿರ ಹೋದಾಗ ತಿಳಿಯಿತು ಅವಳು ರಾಕ್ಷಸಿ ಎಂದು. ಅವಳು ಅವನನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿಯಲು ಓಡಿ ಬಂದಳು. ಅವಳಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಆತ ಮತ್ತೂ ಜೋರಾಗಿ ಓಡತೊಡಗಿದ. ಓಡುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ತಿಳಿಯದೇ ಒಂದು ಹಾಳು ಬಾವಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿದ್ದ. ಕಣ್ಣು ಕತ್ತಲೆಗಟ್ಟಿತು. ಸಾವರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ತನ್ನ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನೊಮ್ಮೆ ನೋಡಿಕೊಂಡ. ಬಿದ್ದವನು ಹಾಗೇ ಬಿದ್ದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಕ್ಕಪಕ್ಕದ ಮರಗಳನ್ನು ತಬ್ಬಿ ಬೆಳೆದ ಬಳ್ಳಿ ಕಾಲಿಗೆ ತೊಡರಿತ್ತು. ಬಳ್ಳಿಯ ಸಮೇತ ಆತ ಬಿದ್ದಿದ್ದ. ಬಿದ್ದವನು ಪೂರ್ತಿ ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬಿದ್ದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಬಳ್ಳಿ ಮೊಣಕಾಲಿಗೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು ತಲೆಕೆಳಗಾಗಿ ನೇತಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಮೇಲೆ ನೋಡಿದರೆ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಅಟ್ಟಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದ ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ರಾಕ್ಷಸಿ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದರು. ಕೆಳಗೆ ನೋಡಿದರೆ ದೊಡ್ಡದೊಂದು ಹಾವು ಬುಸುಗುಡುತ್ತಾ ಇವನನ್ನು ನುಂಗಲು ಹವಣಿಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಇಷ್ಟೆಲ್ಲ ಗೊಂದಲಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಬೀಳುವಾಗ ಬಳ್ಳಿ ಸೆಳೆಯಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಮರಕ್ಕೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿದ ಜೇನಿನ ಗೂಡಿಂದ ಜೇನು ಹನಿಹನಿಯಾಗಿ ತೊಟ್ಟಿಕ್ಕುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ತಲೆಕೆಳಗಾಗಿ ನೇತಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈತ ನಾಲಿಗೆಯಿಂದ ಬೀಳುತ್ತಿರುವ ಜೇನನ್ನು ನೆಕ್ಕುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಜೀವನದ ವಸ್ತುಸ್ಥಿತಿಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಹೇಳಿದ ಕಥೆಯಿದು. ಒಟ್ಟಾರೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಬದುಕು ಎಂದು ಇಷ್ಟೆಲ್ಲ ಭಯಾನಕ ಗೊಂದಲಗಳ ನಡುವೆಯೂ ಜೇನಿನಂತಹ ಸವಿಯನ್ನು ಉಣ್ಣುವುದು ಎಂದರ್ಥ. ಹುಲಿ, ಸಿಂಹ, ರಾಕ್ಷಸಿ, ಹಾವು, ಬಾವಿ – ಈ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನು ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಜೀವನದ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳು, ಹೋರಾಟ ಎಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳೋಣ. ಹಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಸಂತೋಷ ಯಾವುದು? ಬದುಕನ್ನು ನಾವು ಆಸ್ವಾದಿಸುವ ರೀತಿ. 'ಕಲೆ' ಅನುಭವಿಸುವವನಿಗೆ ಇಂತಹ ಒಂದು ಸಂತೋಷದ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ. ಉತ್ತಮ 'ಕಲೆ'ಗಳು ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಜೀವನದ ಆಸ್ವಾದ್ಯ ಯೋಗ್ಯ ವಿಷಯಗಳು.

'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ' ಕೂಡಾ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಆಸ್ವಾದ್ಯ ಯೋಗ್ಯವಾಗಿಸುವ ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಕಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು. ಅದು ತನ್ನ ವೈಭವದಿಂದ, ದಿನದಿನಕ್ಕೂ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯ ಪ್ರತಿ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲೂ ಅದರ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶೀಲತೆಯ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ನಾವೀನ್ಯವೆನಿಸುವ ಸುಂದರ ಅನುಭವವನ್ನು ಕೊಡುವುದರಿಂದ ಅದನ್ನು ಆಸ್ವಾದಿಸಬಲ್ಲವರಿಗೆ ಜೇನಿನಂತಹ ಸವಿಯನ್ನು ಉಣಬಡಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬಲ್ಲಿ ಎರಡು ಮಾತಿಲ್ಲ.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಕಲಾಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಜನಶೀಲತೆಯ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಅದರದ್ದೇ ಆದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಸ್ಥಾನವಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿರುವ 'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ' ಪ್ರಯೋಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯದ ನಾವೀನ್ಯತೆಯನ್ನು ತಾನೂ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ ಇತರರಿಗೂ ಅದರ ರುಚಿಯನ್ನು ಉಣಬಡಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿಯೇ ಅದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸಲ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗೊಂಡರೂ ಆಧುನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನೋ, ರಾಮಾಯಣವನ್ನೋ ಜನರಿಗೆ ತಲುಪಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದೇ ಇರುವಂತೆ ವಿಶ್ವಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ರಾರಾಜಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಕೆಲವೇ ಕೆಲವು ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಹಿರಿದು. ಭಾರತದ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಎಷ್ಟು ಪರಿಭಾವಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಅದರ ಪ್ರಭಾವದಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲೇ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬಷ್ಟು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆ ಕೇಳದ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಮಗು ಇದ್ದಿರಲಾರದು. ಅಷ್ಟರಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಅದು ಭಾರತೀಯರ ನರನಾಡಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜೀವದ ಸಂಚಾರವಾಗಿ ಬೆರೆತುಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಇಡೀ ನಾಡಿನ ಜೀವಸೆಲೆಯಾಗಿ ಅದು ಈ ಸಮಾಜದ, ಜನಜೀವನದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಮಗ್ಗುಲುಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಭಾವಿಸಿದೆ. ಕಲೆ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರತಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳಿಲ್ಲದ ಕಲೆಯನ್ನು ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಊಹಿಸಲೂ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. 'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ' ಯಥೇಚ್ಛವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳನ್ನು ತನ್ನ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ, ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ.

ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಮತ್ತು ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಕಥೆಗಳಿಗಿಂತ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತದ್ದಾಗಿದೆ. ಯಾಕೆಂದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಶಕ್ತಿಯೇ ಅಂತದ್ದು. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಗುವಷ್ಟು ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯವಾದ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು, ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯವಾದ ಅನುಭವಗಳು ಬೇರೆಲ್ಲೂ ಸಿಗಲಿಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಅದು ಕೊಡುವ ಸಂದೇಶ ಕೂಡ ಅಭೂತಪೂರ್ವವಾದದ್ದು. ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಅದರ ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕರಿಗೆ ತಲುಪಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿರುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೇ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿರಬಹುದು. ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಅನೇಕ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಅದರ ಬಹುತೇಕ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮತೆಗಳನ್ನೊಳಗೊಂಡು ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಅವಲೋಕಿಸಿದರೆ ನೂರಕ್ಕೂ ಮಿಕ್ಕಿ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ಪ್ರಚಲಿತದಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಸುಮಾರು ನಾನೂರು ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಹಿಂದೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳಿವೆ.

ಗಾಯನ, ನರ್ತನ, ವಾದನಗಳಿಂದ ಸಂಪನ್ನಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ. ಇದರ ಉಗಮದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಸರಿಯಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ದೊರೆಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೂ ಮುಳಿಯ ತಿಮ್ಮಪ್ಪನವರು ತಮ್ಮ 'ಪಾರ್ತಿಸುಬ್ಬ'ದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ, ಗೋವಿಂದ ದೀಕ್ಷಿತರ 'ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಸುಧಾ'ದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ವಿವರವಾದ ಚರ್ಚೆಗಳು ಬರುತ್ತವೆ. ಶಿವರಾಮ ಕಾರಂತರು, ಕುಕ್ಕಿಲ ಕೃಷ್ಣಭಟ್ಟರು, ಭೀಮರಾವ್ ಜಿಟಗಟ್ಟಿಯವರು ಇವರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವನ್ನು ಮೂಡಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಆದರೂ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಹುಟ್ಟು ಹೇಗೆ ಆಯಿತು ಎಂಬಲ್ಲಿ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಮ್ಮತವಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದರ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಲ್ಲಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು ಸಿಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಈ ವಿವರಗಳೇನೇ ಇರಲಿ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳ ಪಾರಮ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಗಳೆಯುವಂತಿಲ್ಲ. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳ ವಿಷಯ ಬಂದಾಗ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಕಾರರು ಬಹುತೇಕ ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸ ಭಾರತದ ಪದ್ಯಗಳನ್ನೋ ಅಥವಾ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀಶನ ಜೈಮಿನೀ ಭಾರತದ ಪದ್ಯಗಳನ್ನೊ ಆಯ್ದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಯಾಕೆಂದರೆ ಈ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾವ್ಯಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮ, ಧ್ವನಿಶಕ್ತಿ, ಪದಬಂಧದ ಬಿಗಿ, ಕಥನಕಲೆ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಸೂಕ್ತವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಗೊಂಡಿದೆ ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಪುನರಾವಲೋಕಿಸುವ ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕಟ್ಟುವ, ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಹೊಳೆಯಿಸುವ ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ದರ್ಶಿಸುವ ಕೆಲಸ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಕಲಾವಿದರಿಂದ ರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಅವರು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಿಗೆ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಈ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು 3 ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಬಹುದು.

1. ಭೀಷ್ಮ ವಿಜಯ : ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲೊಂದು ಇದು. ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಒಂದು ಸಣ್ಣ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಇಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಓದಿದವರಿಗೆ ಈ ಕಥೆ ಗೊತ್ತಿರುವಂತದ್ದೇ. ಆದರೆ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿ ಕುಣಿತ, ಹಾವ, ಭಾವ–ಭಂಗಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಸತನ ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯವಹಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದ ಕಥಾನಕ ಹೀಗಿದೆ.

ಕಾಶಿಯ ರಾಜ ತನ್ನ ಮೂವರು ಹೆಣ್ಣುಮಕ್ಕಳಾದ ಅಂಬೆ, ಅಂಬಿಕ, ಅಂಬಾಲಿಕೆಯರಿಗೆ ಸ್ವಯಂವರ ಏರ್ಪಡಿಸಲು ಯೋಚಿಸಿ ನಾನಾ ಭಾಗದ ರಾಜರಿಗೆ ಆಮಂತ್ರಣ ಕಳಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸೌಭ ದೇಶದ ರಾಜ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಜಲಕ್ರೀಡೆಯಾಡಲು ಬಂದ ಅಂಬೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಬ್ಬರಲ್ಲೂ ಪ್ರೇಮಾಂಕುರವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮದುವೆಯಾಗುತ್ತೇನೆಂದು ಸಾಲ್ವ ಅಂಬೆಗೆ ವಚನವನ್ನೀಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಮರುದಿನ ಸ್ವಯಂವರದ ಹಣಾಹಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಗೆದ್ದು ಬೀಗುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ಆಮಂತ್ರಣವಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೂ ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಬಂದು ಶಕ್ತಿಪ್ರದರ್ಶನಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಲ್ವನನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸಾಲ್ವ ಪರೀಕ್ಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಂದ ಸೋಲುಣ್ಣುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಎಲ್ಲ ರಾಜರೂ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಶರಣಾಗತರಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕಾಶೀರಾಜನಿಗೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನೊಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ತನ್ನ ಹೆಣ್ಣುಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಕಳುಹಿಸಲು ಮನಸಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೂ ಗೆದ್ದ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವಯಂವರದ ನಿಯಮದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಮೂರೂ ಜನರನ್ನು ಭೀಷ್ಮನೊಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸಿಕೊಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಸ್ತಿನಾವತಿಗೆ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮ

ಅವರನ್ನು ವಿಚಿತ್ರವೀರ್ಯನಿಗೆ ಮದುವೆ ಮಾಡಿಸಲು ಯೋಚಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ಅಂಬೆ ಅದನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಿ ತಾನು ಸೌಭ ದೇಶದ ರಾಜ ಸಾಲ್ವನನ್ನು ಒಲಿದಿರುವುದಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಓರ್ವ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣನನ್ನು ಅವಳ ಜೊತೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಸಾಲ್ವನಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆದರೆ ಸ್ವಯಂವರದ ಸೋಲಿನಿಂದ ಅವಮಾನಿತನಾದ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಿ ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಂಬೆ ದುಃಖ ಮತ್ತು ಅವಮಾನದ ಬೆಂಕಿಯಿಂದ 'ಭೀಷ್ಮ ನೀನು ಗೆದ್ದಿರುವವನು ತಾನೇ? ನೀನೇ ಮದುವೆಯಾಗು' ಎಂದು ಕೇಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಭೀಷ್ಮ ತನ್ನ ಆಜನ್ಮ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚರ್ಯದ ಕಥೆ ಹೇಳಿ ಅವಳ ಮಾತನ್ನು ತಳ್ಳಿಹಾಕುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ಸಹಜವಾದ ಲಜ್ಜೆ, ಅವಮಾನ, ಕೋಪದಿಂದ ಬೆಂದ ಅಂಬೆ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸೇರುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಮೋಹಿಸಿಬಂದ ಕಿರಾತನನ್ನು ಭೀಷ್ಮನ ವಧೆಗಾಗಿ ಕಳುಹುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಆತ ಸೋತಾಗ ಮತ್ತೆ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸೇರುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಪರಶುರಾಮನ ಮೊರೆ ಹೋಗಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿಸಲು ಭರವಸೆ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಹಸ್ತಿನಾವತಿಗೆ ಬಂದ ಪರಶುರಾಮ ಭೀಷ್ಮನನ್ನು ಅಂಬೆಯ ಮದುವೆಯಾಗೆಂದು ಕೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಇದನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸುವುದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಗುರು-ಶಿಷ್ಯರಲ್ಲಿ ಘನಘೋರ ಕಾಳಗ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಷ್ಟರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಶರೀರವಾಣಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಪರಶುರಾಮ ಯುದ್ಧವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ನಿರ್ಗಮಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನೊಂದ ಅಂಬೆ ಮುಂದಿನ ಜನ್ಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನನ್ನು ಕೊಲ್ಲುವ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ ಮಾಡಿ ಅಗ್ನಿಕುಂಡಕ್ಕೆ ಹಾರಿ ಪ್ರಾಣತ್ಯಾಗ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ವಿಚಿತ್ರವೀರ್ಯನ ವಿವಾಹದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ ಕೊನೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆಯನ್ನುಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ ಇದಾಗಿದೆ. ರಂಗಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇಕಾದ ಹಾಗೆ ಮೂಲ ಕಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಲ್ಪಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮೊದಲು 'ಭೀಷ್ಮವಿಜಯ'ದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನ ಧೀಮಂತವಾದ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವವೇ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಬೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಕೇಳುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸುವಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕರ ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ನೊಂದ ಮಹಿಳೆಯಾಗಿ ತಿರಸ್ಕೃತವಾಗುವ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕರುಣಾಪೂರಿತ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇದು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ನಟನನ್ನು ಅವಲಂಬಿಸಿದ್ದರೂ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳು ಸದ್ಯದ ಸಮಾಜದ ಹೆಣ್ಣಿನ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳೂ ಆಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕನನ್ನು ತಟ್ಟುವಲ್ಲಿ ಇದು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ದಿ. ಹಾರಾಡಿ ರಾಮ ಗಾಣಿಗ, ಕೆರೆಮನೆ ಮಹಾಬಲ ಹೆಗಡೆ, ಪುತ್ತೂರು ಕೃಷ್ಣಭಟ್ಟ ಮುಂತಾದವರು ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಪಾತ್ರಧಾರಿಯಾಗಿಯೂ, ದಿ. ಚಿಟ್ಟಾಣಿ ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರ ಹೆಗಡೆ, ಪುತ್ತೂರು ನಾರಾಯಣ ಹೆಗಡೆ ಮುಂತಾದವರು ಸಾಲ್ವ ಪಾತ್ರಧಾರಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಕ್ಕೆ ಜೀವ ತುಂಬಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳ ಪ್ರಾಮುಖ್ಯತೆಯೂ ಬದಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಹಾಗೆ ನೋಡಿದರೆ ಅಂಬೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮೊದಲ ನಿಗಿ ನಿಗಿ ಕೆಂಡ. ಅವಳಿಗಾದ ಅವಮಾನವೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಬೀಜವಾಯ್ತೇನೋ! ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಶಾಪ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಸುಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಅಂಬೆಗೆ ಸರಿಯಾದ ಮಾನ, ಸಮ್ಮಾನ ಸ್ಥಾನ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿದರೆ ಬಹುಶಃ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಎಷ್ಟೊಂದು ದುರಂತ ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲವೇನೋ! ಇದನ್ನು ಪ್ರಸಂಗಕಾರರು ಮತ್ತು ನಟರು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತೋರಿಸಿ ಇಂತಹ ಭಾವನೆ ಉಂಟಾಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುವಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಂಬೆ ಸಾಲ್ವನಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋದಾಗ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಆಕೆಯ ಪ್ರೀತಿಯನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಶಾಪದ ಪರಿ ಇರುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅಂಬೆಯ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತೋರಿಸುವ ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಿವೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ ಹೊಸ್ತೋಟ ಮಂಜುನಾಥ ಭಾಗ್ವತರು ಬರೆದ ಭೀಷ್ಮವಿಜಯದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದ ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಬಹುದು.

ಭೂಸುರಗಾಸನವಿತ್ತು ಸತ್ಕರಿಸುತ । ಲಾಸಾಲ್ವ ಬಳಿಕೆಂದನು ॥
ಕಾಶೀಶನಣುಗೆ ನೀ ಇಲ್ಲಿಗೇತಕೆ ಬಂದೆ । ಮೋಸವ ನಾ ಬಲ್ಲೆನು ॥ 1 ॥
ಒಲವಿನಿಂದಲಿ ನಿನ್ನನೊಪ್ಪಿದಂದವನಾನು । ತಿಳಿಯದೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನೊಳಲಿ ॥
ಕಳುಹಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿಹನೆನ್ನ ಹಿಂದದೊಪ್ಪಂದವ । ತಿಳಿದೆನ್ನವರಿಸು ನೀನು ॥ 2 ॥
ವರಿಸುವ ಮನವಿರಲಾಸ್ವಯುವರದಲಿ ತೊರೆದೆಯೇಕೆನ್ನ ನೀನು
ಧುರದಿವಿರಥನಾಗಿ ತಿರುಗಿದ ದುಮ್ಮಾನ । ಕೊರೆವುದು ಚಿತ್ತವನು ॥ 3 ॥
ವಿಕ್ರಮಪಣವ ನೋಡುತಲಿರೆ ಗಾಂಗೇಯ । ನಾಕ್ರಮಿಸಿದುದ ಕಂಡು
ಕಕ್ಕುಲತೆಯ ತಾಳೆದ ಹೆಣ್ಣು ನಾನಲ್ಲವೆ । ತಕ್ಕೈಸು ಮುದರಿ ನೀನು ॥ 4 ॥

ಮೊದಲು ಭೀಷ್ಮನ ರಣದೊಳ್ಳೈದಿದೆ । ಚದುರೆ ಬಳಕೀಭಾವದಿ
ಒದಗಿಪಥವಿಡಿದಿಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದೆಯ ಬಂಧನ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ನಿಧಾನದಿ ॥

ಸಾಲ್ವನಿಂದ ತಿರಸ್ಕೃತಳಾದ ಅಂಬೆ ಮರಳಿ ಬರುವಾಗ ಅಂದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ.
ಕನಿಕರವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಎನ್ನಾಯ ಹಣೆಯೊಳಗೀಪರಿ ಬರೆದಿಹ ।
ವನಜಭವನು ಕಡುದುಷ್ಟನು ಸಾಲ್ವನು ಯಮನಾದ ॥
ಕಣಕಿಳಿದಿಹ ಭೀಷ್ಮನೆ ಕಾರಣನೀರುರ್ದೆಸೆಗೆ

ಆದ ಅಪಮಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಅಂಬೆಗೆ ಮೊದಲು ಸಿಟ್ಟು ಉಕ್ಕುವುದು ದೇವಬ್ರಹ್ಮನ ಮೇಲೆ. ಪ್ರೀತಿಗಾಗಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಿ ಬಂದರೂ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಅವಳಿಗೆ ಸಿಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹೆಣ್ಣಾದ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಮಾಡುವ ಅವಮಾನ ಬೇರೆ. ಹೆಸರಿಗೆ 'ಸ್ವಯಂವರ'. ಗೆಲ್ಲೋದು ಯಾರೋ? ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಕೇವಲ ಸ್ವತ್ತು, ಗೆದ್ದವರ ಸ್ವತ್ತು ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಸಮಾಜ ನಡೆದುಕೊಂಡುಬಿಟ್ಟಿತು. ಮನಸಾರೆ ಪ್ರೀತಿಸಿದ ಸಾಲ್ವ ಕೈಬಿಟ್ಟ, ಯಮನಂತಾದ. ಹೆತ್ತ ತಂದೆ ಮಗಳ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನರಿಯದೇ ಪಣವಿರಿಸಿದ. ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಪಣವನ್ನು ಗೆದ್ದವನಾದರೂ ಮದುವೆಯಾದನೇ? ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅಂಬೆಯ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹೀನ ದುರ್ದೆಶೆಗೆ ಆತ ಕಾರಣನಾದ. ಕಣಕ್ಕಿಳಿಯುವ ಹಕ್ಕೇ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಹಕ್ಕು ಚಲಾಯಿಸಿದ. ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಅವಸಾನ. ದುರಂತ ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಮೊದಲ ಬೀಜ.

ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಪಾತ್ರಧಾರಿಗಳು ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಿರುವ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ತರವಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ನೋಡುವ ರೀತಿ ! ಬೆಂಕಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾರುವ ಅಂಬೆಯನ್ನು ಬೆಂಕಿ ಅವಳ ಕಾಲಿನಿಂದ ಮೊದಲ್ಗೊಂಡು ಅವಳ ಇಡೀ ಶರೀರವನ್ನಾಕ್ರಮಿಸುತ್ತ ಸಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಂಬೆ, ಈ ದುರಂತವನ್ನು ಕಣ್ಣಾರೆ ನೋಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಶಾಪ ಹಾಕುತ್ತಾಳೆ. 'ನನ್ನ ಬಟ್ಟೆ ಸುಡುತ್ತಿದೆ, ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಇಷ್ಟೆಲ್ಲಾ ದುರಂತಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾದ ನಿನಗೆ ನಿನ್ನ ವಂಶದ ಜನರಿಗೆ ಬಟ್ಟೆ ಇರದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಒದಗಿ ಬರಲಿ, ಬೆಂಕಿ ಉರಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಂಬೆಯ ಚರ್ಮ ಸುಡತೊಡಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನನ್ನ ಚರ್ಮ ಸುಟ್ಟು ಒಳಗಿನ ಬಿಳಿಯ ಹಸಿ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಭೀಷ್ಮ, ನಿನ್ನ ಸಂತತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಳಿ ರೋಗದ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಹುಟ್ಟಲಿ, ಬೆಂಕಿ ಉರಿದು ಅಂಬೆ ಕೂದಲನ್ನು ವ್ಯಾಪಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ನನ್ನ ಕೂದಲು ಸುಟ್ಟು ವಾಸನೆ ಹೊಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಭೀಷ್ಮ, ನಿನ್ನ ಸಂತತಿಯ ಹೆಣ್ಣುಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೂದಲು ಕಟ್ಟದೇ ಹೋದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯೊದಗಲಿ. ಬೆಂಕಿ ಮತ್ತು ವ್ಯಾಪಿಸಿ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಮುಖದತ್ತ ಸಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನನ್ನ ಕಣ್ಣುಗಳು ಸುಟ್ಟುರಿಯುತ್ತವೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮ, ನನಗೇನು ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ನಿನ್ನ ಸಂತತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಣ್ಣುಮಕ್ಕಳು ಕುರುಡರಾಗಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಲಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮ.... ಬೆಂಕಿ ಈಗ ಮತ್ತೂ ತನ್ನ ಕೆನ್ನಾಲಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಚಾಚಿ ಅಂಬೆಯನ್ನು ನುಂಗಲು ಹೊಂಚುಹಾಕುತ್ತದೆ. ಬಹುತೇಕ ಅಂಬೆ ಸುಟ್ಟು ಕರಕಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಳೆ. ಅಂತ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನೋವಿನ ಆಕ್ರಂದನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ ಅಂಬೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ನಿನ್ನ ಕಾಲವೇ ನಾಶವಾಗಲಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮ, ನಿನ್ನ ಸಾವು ನನ್ನ ಕೈಯಿಂದಲೇ ಆಗಲಿ....' ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾ ಅಂಬೆ ಸಾಯುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಅಂಬೆಯ ದುರಂತ ಸಾವು ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕರಲ್ಲಿ ಹಲವು ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಾಕುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ಯಶಸ್ವೀ ನಟ ಅಥವಾ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಕಲಾವಿದ ಹೇಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿ ದಾಟಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಇದು ಜ್ವಲಂತ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ. ಒಂದಿಲ್ಲಾ ಒಂದು ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಂಬೆಯ ಶಾಪ ನಿಜವಾಯಿತು ಎಂಬುದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಬಲ್ಲ ಎಲ್ಲರ ಮಾತು ಮತ್ತು ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿಲ್ಲದ ಈ ವಿವರಣೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಓದಿದ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ನಟನಿಗೆ ಅರಿವಿಗೆ ಬಂತು ಮತ್ತು ಈ ಅರಿವು ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕನಿಗೂ ದಾಟಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿತು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಸಂದೇಶ ಅಥವಾ ವಿಷಯ ನಾನಾ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಜನಮನ ತಲುಪುತ್ತ ಜೀವಂತವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದ ಹಾಗಾಯಿತು.

2. ಶರಸೇತು ಬಂಧನ : ಇದೂ ಕೂಡ ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಯಶಸ್ವೀ ಪ್ರಯೋಗವನ್ನು ಕಾಣುವ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಪ್ರಸಂಗ. ಅರ್ಜುನನಿಗೆ ನಾರದರು ಹೇಳಿದ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಒಂದು ವರ್ಷ ತೀರ್ಥಯಾತ್ರೆಗೆ ಹೋದಾಗ ಹನುಮಂತನ ಭೇಟಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ರಾಮಸೇತುವೆಯ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ತೀರಾ ಹಗುರವಾದ ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಆಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ತಾನು ಕೇವಲ ಬಾಣಗಳಿಂದಲೇ ಸೇತುವೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸುವುದಾಗಿ ಹನುಮಂತನ ಹತ್ತಿರ ವಾನರ ಕೊಚ್ಚಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. 'ನೀನು ಬಾಣಗಳಿಂದ

ಸೇತುವೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ್ದೇ ಹೌದಾದರೆ ನಾನದನ್ನು ಮೆಟ್ಟಿ ಮುರಿಯುತ್ತೇನೆ' ಎಂದು ಹನುಮಂತ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. 'ನೀನು ನಾನು ಕಟ್ಟಿದ ಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ಮೂರು ಸಲ ಮುರಿದಿದ್ದೇ ಹೌದಾದರೆ ನಾನು ಪ್ರಾಯೋಪವೇಶ ಮಾಡಿ ಪ್ರಾಣತ್ಯಾಗ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇನೆ' ಎಂದು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಪೌರುಷದಿಂದ ಅಬ್ಬರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಒಪ್ಪಂದದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಬಾಣ ಪ್ರಯೋಗದಿಂದ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ ಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ಮೂರು ಸಲವೂ ಹನುಮಂತ ಮೆಟ್ಟಿ ಮುರಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸೋತು ಅವಮಾನಿತನಾದ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಚಿತೆಗೆ ಹಾರಿ ಪ್ರಾಯೋಪವೇಶ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ವೃದ್ಧ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣನ ವೇಷದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ಅದನ್ನು ತಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಒಪ್ಪಂದ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಾಗ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಗಳು ಯಾರೂ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಕಾರಣ ಒಪ್ಪಂದ ಸರಿಯಾದುದಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣವನ್ನಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು 'ತನ್ನ ಮುಂದೆ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಸಲ ನೀನು ಶರಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸು, ಹನುಮಂತ ಅದನ್ನು ಮುರಿದರೆ ನೀನು ಪ್ರಾಯೋಪವೇಶ ಮಾಡಬಹುದು' ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಪುನಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಸಮ್ಮುಖದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಶರಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹನುಮಂತ ಅದನ್ನು ಮೆಟ್ಟಿ ಮುರಿಯುವುದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಮೊದಲು ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಕೂರ್ಮನಾಗಿ ಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ತನ್ನ ಬೆನ್ನ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೊತ್ತು ಸೇತುವೆ ಮುರಿಯದಂತೆ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸೇತುವೆಯನ್ನು ಮುರಿಯಲಿಕ್ಕಾಗದೇ ಹನುಮಂತ ಖಿನ್ನನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದಾರುಣವಾದ ದುಃಖ ಹನುಮಂತನನ್ನು ಆವರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಸ್ವತಃ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ತಾನು ರಾಮನೇ ಎಂಬುದಾಗಿ ತೋರಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟು ಹನುಮಂತನ ಈ ಪರಿಯ ದುಃಖವನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಣೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಯುದ್ಧದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಧ್ವಜದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದು ಸಹಕರಿಸು ಎಂಬುದಾಗಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಹನುಮಂತನಿಗೆ ಹೇಳಿ ಅವನನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು 'ಶರಸೇತು ಬಂಧನ' ಪ್ರಸಂಗದ ಸಾರಾಂಶ.

ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯವೆಂದರೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ ಕುಮಾರವ್ಯಾಸ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಾಗಲೀ, ಮೂಲಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಾಗಲೀ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಮುಂದೆ ಬಂದ ಪರಮದೇವ ಕವಿಯ 'ತರಂಗಭಾರತ'ದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕಥೆ ಇದೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿದುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದೊಂದು ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಯಶಸ್ವೀ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ. 'ತರಂಗಭಾರತ'ದಲ್ಲಿ ಹನುಮಂತ ಒಂದನೇ ಸಲ ಸೇತುವೆ ಮುರಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಪ್ರಾಯೋಪವೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿದ್ಧನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆದರೆ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದು ಮೂರು ಸಲ ನಡೆದು ನಾಲ್ಕನೇ ಸಲಕ್ಕೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬರುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಮತ್ತು ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಸ್ನೇಹ, ಹನುಮಂತನ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಭಕ್ತಿ, ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ದೂರದರ್ಶಿತ್ವ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಮನಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ತಟ್ಟುವ ಹಾಗೆ ನಿರೂಪಿತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಪಾತ್ರಧಾರಿಗಳೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಲ್ಲ. ನಾಟಕವಾದರೆ ಏಕಾಂಕ ನಾಟಕವಾಗುವ ಹಾಗೆ ಇದರ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಯಿದೆ. ಮೂರು ಅಥವಾ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಪಾತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯಮೋಘ ಅಭಿನಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹನುಮಂತನ ಮೇರೆಯಿಲ್ಲದ ಪೌರುಷ ಹಾಗೂ ತನ್ನನ್ನೇ ತಾನು ತೆತ್ತುಕೊಂಡ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಭಕ್ತಿ ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕನ ಕಣ್ಣಂಚನ್ನು ಒದ್ದೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಅವಹೇಳನಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡ ಹನುಮಂತ,

'ಮುಕ್ಕುವೆ ಜಗವನು, ತಿಕ್ಕುವೆ ಯಮನನು' ಎಂದು ಗರ್ಜಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದೇ ರೋಷ ಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ರಾಮನಾಗಿ ಕಂಡ ಮೇಲೆ ದಾಸಭಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ಯಶಸ್ವೀ ನಟ ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಇದನ್ನು ಅದ್ಭುತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದ ಯಶಸ್ಸನ್ನೂ ಅದರ ಸಂದೇಶವನ್ನು ಸಾರುತ್ತಾನೆ.

3. ಗದಾಪರ್ವ: ಸುಮಾರು 13 ರಿಂದ 15 ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಅಭಿನಯವನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸುವಷ್ಟು ಹಿರಿದಾದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವಿದು. ಕಥೆ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದೇ ಇರುವ ಹಾಗೆ ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಯುದ್ಧದ ಕೊನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವೈಶಂಪಾಯನ ಸರೋವರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಡಗಿದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ್ನು ಬೇಡನಿಂದ ತಿಳಿದ ಪಾಂಡವರು ಅವನನ್ನು ಹುಡುಕಿ ಕೊಲ್ಲುವುದು. ಭೀಮನನ್ನು ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರನ ಯುದ್ಧ ನೀತಿಯಂತೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಸ್ಯಮಂತ ಪಂಚಕದ ಬಳಿ ಯುದ್ಧ ನಿಶ್ಚಯ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯಾರ ಕರೆಗೂ ನೀರಿನಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬರದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ಭೀಮನ 'ಎಲೋ ಎಲೋ ನೃಪಕುಲ ಕುನ್ನಿ.... ಕಳುವಿನ

ಜೂಜಾಡುವ ಬಾರೈ' ಎಂಬ ಕೂಗಿಗೆ ಉರಿದೆದ್ದು ಬಂದು ಯುದ್ಧಕ್ಕೆ ಭೀಮನನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯುದ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಮ ಮೊದಲು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಗದಾಘಾತಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂರ್ಛೆ ತಪ್ಪಿ ಬೀಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅರ್ಜುನ ಶೈತ್ಯೋಪಚಾರ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಭೀಮ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಸೂಚನೆಯಂತೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ತೊಡೆ ಮುರಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅವನ ಊರುಭಂಗ, ಮುಕುಟಭಂಗ ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞೆಯನ್ನು ಈಡೇರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕೆರಳಿದ ಬಲರಾಮನನ್ನು ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಸಂತೈಸುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಇದೂ ಕೂಡಾ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದಾಗಿದೆ. ಯಾಕೆಂದರೆ ಯುದ್ಧದ ಭೀಕರತೆ, ಭೀಮನ ಪೌರುಷ, ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಚಾತುರ್ಯ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅತಿ ವಿಜೃಂಭಣೆಯಿಂದ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿ ತೋರಿಸಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಸಾಹಸ ಕೂಡಾ ಕಡಿಮೆಯಿಲ್ಲವೆಂಬಂತೆ ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ನಡೆವ ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕಥಾನಕವನ್ನು ಅದರ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸಂದೇಶಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕರಿಗೆ ಮುಟ್ಟಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ತೊಡೆಮುರಿದು ಬಿದ್ದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಿಗೆ ಭೀಮ ಹೀಗೆ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ:

"ಸರಳಭೋಜನ, ಕರಗಿನುರಿಗೆ ದ್ಯೂತದಿ ಗೆದ್ದ । ಪರಿಗೆ ವಸನವ
ಸೆಳೆದುರಿತಕೆ ವನಕೆ ತೆರಳಿಸಿದ ದೋಷಕೆ ಗದಾಘಾತಮಿದು ನೋಡು
ದುರುಳ ನಿನ್ನಯ ಮುಕುಟವ । ಚರಣದಿಂದೊದೆದು ಕಳಚುವೆನು ।
ಪಂಥವನು । ಮರುತಜನಕೆಣಕಿದವರೊಳವರೆ ಜಗದಿ ಉರುಳುತಿರು
ಹೆಣವಾಗಿ ನರಿನಾಯಿಕಾಗೆಗಳು ಹರಿಹರಿದು ತಿನ್ನುತಿರಲಿ ॥ 1 ॥

ಗದಾಘಾತಕ್ಕೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಣೆಯಿದೆ. ಬಲರಾಮನ ಸಿಟ್ಟನ್ನು ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುತ್ತ ಸಮಾಧಾನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣ.

"ಮುನಿಪ ಮೈತ್ರೇಯರ ಕೆಣಕಿದನೀಬೂಳ । ಅಣಕಿಸಿ ತೊಡೆಯನು
ತಟ್ಟಿದ ಬಗೆಗಾಗ ಘನಶಾಪ ಪಡೆದಿರುವ । ಧೃವ ಕಡೆಗಣಿಸಿದ
ಪಾಪಿಯುವ । ಈ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯ । ನನುಭವಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ । ನೀ ತಿಳಿದಿದ ಕನಿಕರ
ತೋರು ಮುಳಿಯಬೇಡ ಮನದೊಳು॥"

ಒಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರನ ಧರ್ಮವ್ಯಾಮೋಹ, ಭೀಮನ ಸಾಹಸ, ಕೃಷ್ಣಪಾರಮ್ಯ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ಹೇಳುವ ಈ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ ನಟರ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಯ ಮೂಲಕವೂ ಲವಲವಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ನೋಡಿದಷ್ಟೂ ಸಲ ಹೊಸ ಕುಣಿತ, ಭಾವ, ಭಂಗಿ, ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರೇಕ್ಷಕನ ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಚಾರಗಳನ್ನು, ಭಾವನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಒಟ್ಟೊಟ್ಟಿಗೇ ಹುಟ್ಟುಹಾಕುತ್ತದೆ.

ಹಲವು ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಸಂದೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಜನರಿಗೆ ತಲುಪಿಸುತ್ತದೆ ಎನ್ನಬಹುದು. ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಪುಲವಾಗಿರುವ ಅದರ ಅಂದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನಾಧರಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳೇ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇವಲ ಮೂರು ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನಷ್ಟೇ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನವು ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕತೆಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಒತ್ತನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವುದು ಅದನ್ನು ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮಾಡಿದವರಿಗೆ ವೇದ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಜೊತೆಗೇ ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತೀವ್ರವಾದ ಭಾವಾಭಿನಯಕ್ಕೆ ಒತ್ತು ಕೊಡುವ ಯುದ್ಧ, ಪೌರುಷ, ಜಲಕೇಳಿ, ಶೃಂಗಾರ, ಭಕ್ತಿ, ಪ್ರೇಮವೇ ಮುಂತಾದ ರೋಚಕ ಅನುಭವದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿವೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ ಅಂಶ. ಶಾಂತ ಮತ್ತು ಕರುಣ ರಸಗಳನ್ನು ಅಭಿನಯಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಕಡಿಮೆಯೆಂದೇ ಹೇಳಬೇಕು. ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯವೆಂದರೆ ಇಡೀ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಅದರ ಘಟನಾಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಜೋಡಿಸಿದರೆ ಇಡೀ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕಥಾನಕವೇ ನಮ್ಮೆದುರು ತೆರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಲಕ್ಷಣ. ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನದ ಹಾಡು ಏನೇ ಇದ್ದರೂ ಅದರ ಆಶಯಕ್ಕೆ ಭಂಗ ಬರದ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಟರು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಸಂಭಾಷಣೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಾರೆ ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೇ ಅಂಬೆಯಂತಹ ಪಾತ್ರ ಭೀಷ್ಮಶಾಪದ ವಿವಿಧ ಆವರಣವನ್ನು ತೆರೆದಿಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿರುವುದು. ಛಂದಸ್ಸಿನ ಬಳಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು ಪ್ರಯೋಗ ನಡೆಸಿವೆ. ಕರಾವಳಿ, ಮಲೆನಾಡಿನ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕತೆ, ಆಹಾರ, ಆಡುಮಾತಿನ ಬಳಕೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಉಳಿದದ್ದೇನೇ ಇರಲಿ, ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಇಡೀ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕಥಾನಕಕ್ಕೆ ಮಿಡಿಯುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಅದನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದ, ಅನುಭವಿಸಿದ ಯಾರೇ ಆದರೂ ಒಪ್ಪತಕ್ಕ ಮಾತು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಗಳನ್ನು ಅದರ ಸಂವೇದನಾಯುತ ವಿಚಾರಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕಾಲಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಜನಮಾನಸಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಟ್ಟಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಪಾತ್ರವಹಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಂತೆಯೇ ಒಳ ಮತ್ತು ಹೊರ ಅನುಭವವಾಗಿ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿ ಹಾಗೂ ವಿಶಾಲತೆಗೆ ತೆರೆದುಕೊಂಡ ಬಗೆ ಬೆರಗು ಹುಟ್ಟಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ತನ್ನ ಏಳು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ನದಿಗೆ ಮುಳುಗಿಸುವ ತಾಯಿಯನ್ನು ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಮಗುವನ್ನು ಬಿಡಲಾಗದ ಅವಿವಾಹಿತ ತಾಯಿಯ ದುಃಖವನ್ನು ಪರಿಚಯಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಬಂಧನಗಳಾಚೆ ತನ್ನ ಹಕ್ಕಿಗಾಗಿ ಕುದಿಯುವ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಶಾಪದ ಮುಂದೆ ಇಚ್ಛಾಮರಣದ ಇಚ್ಛೆಯೇ ಮಣಿಯುವ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಂತವರನ್ನು ರಂಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ತೋರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಪತಿವ್ರತೆ ಅತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಮೈದುನ ಆಸ್ಥಾನಿಕರ ಮುಂದೆ ಬೆತ್ತಲುಗೊಳಿಸಲು ಹವಣಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬ ದೇವಲೋಕದ ಅಪ್ಸರೆಗೆ ಮಣಿಯದ ದೃಶ್ಯ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತದೆ. ರಣಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯದ್ಭುತ ಶೌರ್ಯ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿಸಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಆಗ ತಾನೇ ರಣಾಂಗಣಕ್ಕೆ ನುಗ್ಗಿದ ಹಸಿಬಾಲ ಮೋಸಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಸಾಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಸುಗೂಸುಗಳ ಬರ್ಬರ ಕೊಲೆ ರಾತ್ರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಬ್ಬ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತ ಹುಟ್ಟಿನ ಗುಟ್ಟು ಗೊತ್ತಾದ ಮೇಲೂ ಸ್ನೇಹಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕಾಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಎಲ್ಲ ಗೊತ್ತಿದ್ದೂ ಸುಮ್ಮನಿರುವ ಅಜ್ಜ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅನ್ನ ತಿಂದಿದ್ದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ತನ್ನ ಪ್ರಿಯಶಿಷ್ಯರಿಗೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿ ಹೋರಾಡುವ ಗುರು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾನೆ. ವಿವೇಕಿಗಳ ವಿವೇಕಕ್ಕೆ ಕಿವಿಯಾಗಿಸದ ಛಲ ಸಾವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪರ್ಯವಸಾನವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಒಂದೇ, ಎರಡೇ, ಎಣಿಸುತ್ತ ಹೋದರೆ ಸಾವಿರಾರು ಘಟನೆಗಳು ರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೈದೆಳೆದು ವಿಜೃಂಭಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಜೂಟು, ಬೇಟೆಯ ವ್ಯಸನ, ಮಾರಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಸ್ತ್ರೀ, ತಾಯಂದಿರ ಗೋಳು, ಅಸುನೀಗುವ ಮಕ್ಕಳು, ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಚಾತುರ್ಯ, ಅತಿರಥ, ಮಹಾರಥರ ಸೋಲು, ಅವಮಾನ, ದುಃಖ, ಸಾವು, ನೋವು – ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಂತೇ – ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಗೊಂಡು ಜನಮಾನಸವನ್ನು ಮುಟ್ಟುವ, ತಟ್ಟುವ, ಭಾವುಕರಾಗಿಸುವ ವೈಚಾರಿಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಉದ್ದೀಪಿಸುವ, ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುವ, ನೈತಿಕತೆ ಬೆಳೆಸುವ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜೀವಂತಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬಲ್ಲಿ 'ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ'ದ ಹೆಗ್ಗಳಿಕೆಯಿದೆ.

ಗಮನಿಸಿದ ಆಕರ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳು:

1. **ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ** – ಲೇಖಕರು – ಹೊಸ್ತೋಟ ಮಂಜುನಾಥ ಭಾಗವತರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ – ಅಭಿನವ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು.
2. **ಯಕ್ಷಗಾನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳು** – ಡಾ. ಆನಂದರಾಮ ಉಪಾಧ್ಯ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ–ಧಾತ್ರಿ ಪುಸ್ತಕ ಮಾಲೆ.

GAMAKA VACHANA : RAJASUYA YAGA IN SABHAPARVA

Vachana : Smt. Gangamma Keshavamurthy Vyakhyana : Smt. Geetha Prabhakar

❑

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯ

—ವಿ। ಎ. ಹರಿದಾಸ ಭಟ್ಟ

ಶ್ರೀಮಧ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ತಾವು ಹೋದಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಅನೇಕ ಹಸ್ತಪ್ರತಿಗಳನ್ನೂ ಅನೇಕ ಪುರಾಣಾದಿ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳನ್ನೂ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ವಿಮರ್ಶಿಸಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದು ಈ ನಿರ್ಣಯಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದೊಂದು ವಿಮರ್ಶಾತ್ಮಕ ಕೃತಿ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಒಂದು ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಗ್ರಂಥ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ಪಂಚಮವೇದ ಎಂದು ಖ್ಯಾತಿ ಪಡೆದ ತತ್ತ್ವಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಅನೇಕ ಪುರಾಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೋರಿಬರುವ ವಿರುದ್ಧಾಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಯುಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಭಗವತ್ ಪ್ರಸಾದಲಬ್ಧವಾದ ಬುದ್ಧಿಬಲದಿಂದ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಮಾಡಿ, ಅನೇಕ ಕಲ್ಪಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಕಥೆಗಳನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರಮೇಯಗಳನ್ನೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ- ಎಂದು ಶ್ರೀಮಧ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯ ಶ್ರೀಮಧ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಬರೆದ ಕೃತಿ. 32 ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳಷ್ಟು ವಿಸ್ತಾರವಾದ ಈ ಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥಾ ನಿರ್ಣಯವಷ್ಟೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಮೊದಲ ಮೂರು ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವೇದಾದಿ ಸಕಲ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನೂ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಕ್ರಮವನ್ನೂ ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. 4ನೇ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯದಿಂದ 9ನೇ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳವರೆಗೆ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. 10ನೇ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಗವಾನ್ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರ ಅವತಾರದ ನಿರ್ಣಯವಿದೆ. 11 ರಿಂದ 32 ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳವರೆಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕಥಾ ನಿರ್ಣಯವಿದೆ.

ನಿರ್ಣಯಕ್ಕೆ ಆಧಾರ -

ಶ್ರೀಮಧ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ತಾವು ಹೋದಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಅನೇಕ ಹಸ್ತಪ್ರತಿಗಳನ್ನೂ ಅನೇಕ ಪುರಾಣಾದಿ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳನ್ನೂ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ವಿಮರ್ಶಿಸಿ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದು ಈ ನಿರ್ಣಯ ಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದನ್ನೂ ಈ ಗ್ರಂಥದಲ್ಲೇ ಅವರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ-

'ದೇಶೇ ದೇಶೇ ತಥಾ ಗ್ರಂಥಾನ್ ದೃಷ್ಟ್ವಾಚೈವ ಪೃಥಗ್ ವಿಧಾನ್ ।
ಯಥಾ ಸ ಭಗವಾನ್ ವ್ಯಾಸಃ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾನ್ನಾರಾಯಣಃ ಪ್ರಭುಃ ।
ಜಗಾದ ಭಾರತಾದ್ಯೇಷು ತಥಾ ವಕ್ಷ್ಯೇ ತದೀಕ್ಷಯಾ ॥' (2.12)

ಇಷ್ಟು ಪ್ರಯಾಸದಿಂದ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಈ ನಿರ್ಣಯ ಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನು ಓದಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿರುವ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪು ಎಂದು ನಿರಾಕರಿಸಬಾರದು, ಎನ್ನುವ ಎಚ್ಚರಿಕೆಯನ್ನೂ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ-

'ನೈಕಗ್ರಂಥಾಶ್ರಯಾತ್ ತಸ್ಮಾತ್ ನಾಶಂಕ್ಯಾತ್ರ ವಿರುದ್ಧತಾ ॥' (9.124)

ಹೀಗೆ ಇದೊಂದು ವಿಮರ್ಶಾತ್ಮಕ ಕೃತಿ.

ನಿರ್ಣಯದ ವಿಧಾನ -

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಒಂದು ಇತಿಹಾಸಗ್ರಂಥ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ, ಪಂಚಮವೇದ ಎಂದು ಖ್ಯಾತಿ ಪಡೆದ ತತ್ತ್ವಶಾಸ್ತ್ರವೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಅನೇಕ ಪುರಾಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೋರಿಬರುವ ವಿರುದ್ಧಾಂಶಗಳನ್ನು ಯುಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಭಗವತ್ ಪ್ರಸಾದಲಬ್ಧವಾದ ಬುದ್ಧಿಬಲದಿಂದ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಮಾಡಿ, ಅನೇಕ ಕಲ್ಪಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಕಥೆಗಳನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರಮೇಯಗಳನ್ನೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ-ಎಂದು ಶ್ರೀಮಧ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ (ಮ.ತಾ. 9.122-44).

ಅಂಶರೂಪಗಳ ವಿವರ -

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಸಾತ್ವಿಕ-ತಾಮಸಶಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಸಂಘರ್ಷ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಸಾತ್ವಿಕ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳು ದೇವತೆಗಳ-ಗಂಧರ್ವರ ಅವತಾರ. ತಾಮಸರು ದುಷ್ಟಶಕ್ತಿಗಳ ಅವತಾರ. ಯಾರು ಯಾವ ಅವತಾರ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾಧಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಐದು ಜನ ಪಾಂಡವರು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ದೇವತೆಗಳ ಅವತಾರರು, ಎಂದು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ತಿಳಿದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆದರೆ, ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಗಮನಕ್ಕೆ ಬಾರದ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳೂ ಒಂದಲ್ಲ ಒಂದು ದೇವತೆಯ ಅವತಾರರು, ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಭಕ್ತನಾದ ಅಕ್ರೂರನು ಕಿಶೋರ ಎಂಬ ಗಂಧರ್ವನ ಅವತಾರ. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ವಿಷದ ಹಾಲನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದ ಪೂತನಿಯು ಊರ್ವಶೀ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ತಾಟಕೀ - ಹೀಗೆ ಉಭಯ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವವನ್ನು ಅಳವಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡವಳು. ಯಾದವರ ಮಂತ್ರಿ ಉದ್ಧವ ಬೃಹಸ್ಪತ್ಯಾಚಾರ್ಯರು. ಹೀಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲರ ಅವತಾರರೂಪಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿರುವುದು ವಿಶೇಷಾಂಶವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅಪೂರ್ವಾಂಶಗಳು -

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕೆಲವು ಘಟನೆಗಳ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಇವೆ. ಶಂತನುಮಹಾರಾಜ ಗಂಗೆಯನ್ನು ಮಡದಿಯನ್ನಾಗಿ ವರಿಸಿದ. ಗಂಗೆ ಏಳು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಹೆತ್ತು ಗಂಗಾನದಿಗೆ ಎಸೆದಳು. ತಾಯಿ ತನ್ನ ಹೆತ್ತ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಹೀಗೇಕೆ ಮಾಡಿದಳು ? ಇದಕ್ಕುತ್ತರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಇದರಂತೆ, ಕಂಸ ದೇವಕಿಯ ಹಸುಗೂಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಲ್ಲುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಅನೇಕ ಬಾರಿ ಜರಾಸಂಧನನ್ನು ಸೋಲಿಸಿದರೂ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಜರಾಸಂಧನನ್ನು ಕೊಲ್ಲಲು ಭೀಮಸೇನನನ್ನು ಜೊತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋದ. ಅದೂ

ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಜೊತೆ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ವೇಷದಲ್ಲಿ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಸೂಕ್ತ ಕಾರಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ತೊಡೆ ಮುರಿದು ಬಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪಾಂಡವರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ತನ್ನ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯನಿಷ್ಠೆಯ ಧನ್ಯಜೀವನವನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಮುಂದೆ ಶ್ಲಾಘಿಸಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಯುದ್ಧದ ಪಾಪವನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಮೇಲೆ ಹೊರಿಸಿ ನಿಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗ ದೇವತೆಗಳು ಪುಷ್ಪವೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ತಾನು ಹೇಳಿರುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ದೇವತಾವರ್ಗವೂ ಸಮ್ಮತಿಸಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಕೃತಕೃತ್ಯಭಾವದಿಂದ ಸಾಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಈ ಘಟನೆಯ ರಹಸ್ಯ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಭೀಮಸೇನನಿಗೆ ಮೀಸೆ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲವೇ ? ಅವನು ತೂಬರನೇ ? ಘಟೋತ್ಕಚ ಬೊಕ್ಕು ತಲೆಯವನೇ ? ಇಂತಹ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಕವಾದ ಉತ್ತರ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಕಥಾ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಯ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ -

ನಿರ್ಣಯಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಾಧಾನ್ಯವನ್ನು ನೀಡಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತವಾಗಿ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಥಾನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಮಾಡುವಾಗ ಕಾಲಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ ಅವನ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನೇ ಕೊನೆಯವರೆಗೆ ನಿರೂಪಿಸುವ ಬದಲು ಕಾಲಕ್ರಮದಂತೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ಪಾಂಡವರ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವ ಘಟನೆ ನಡೆಯಿತು, ಹೀಗೆ ಕಾಲಾನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ತೃಣಾವರ್ತಸಂಹಾರ ಪರ್ಯಂತ ಕೃಷ್ಣಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿ ಆಮೇಲೆ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಉತ್ಪತ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿ ಮುಂದೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ನಾಮಕರಣದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಜರಾಸಂಧ ಮಧುರಾಪಟ್ಟಣದ ಮೇಲೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಮೊದಲ ಆಕ್ರಮಣವನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿ ಪಾಂಡುರಾಜನ ಮರಣ, ಪಾಂಡವರ ಹಸ್ತಿನಾಪುರ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಜರಾಸಂಧನ ಎರಡನೆಯ ಆಕ್ರಮಣವನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಕಾಲಾನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯ ನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ವಿಶೇಷ.

ಕೌರವ-ಪಾಂಡವರ ವಯಸ್ಸಿನ ಅಂತರದ ನಿಖರವಾದ ನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಬಲರಾಮ ಹುಟ್ಟಿ ಮೂರು ತಿಂಗಳಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅವತರಿಸಿದ. ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ಮೊದಲ ದಿನ ರಾತ್ರಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದರೆ, ಭೀಮಸೇನ ಮರುದಿನ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ. ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಹುಟ್ಟಿ ಆರು ತಿಂಗಳ ನಂತರ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ. ಹೀಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಪಾತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹಿರಿತನ, ಕಿರಿತನಗಳನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಅನುಕೂಲವಾಗುವಂತೆ ನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ವಿಶೇಷ.

ಹೀಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಮಾಯಣಗಳ ನಿರ್ಣಯಾತ್ಮಕವಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಇವೆ. ಇದು ಒಂದು ಅದ್ಭುತ ಸಂಶೋಧನಾತ್ಮಕವಾದ ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ❑

Chanting by students of Sandipani Gurukula. under the direction of Smt. Rohini Chakravarthy

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧ ಮತ್ತು ದಂಡನೆ

—ಡಾ. ಶಾಂತ ಶೈವಲಿನೀ

ಶಾಪಗಳು–ಧರ್ಮದ ಪಾಲನೆ, ಅಧರ್ಮಗಳ ನಿವಾರಣೆ, ಸಮಾಜದ ಆರೋಗ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಾಧೆ ತಟ್ಟಬಾರದೆಂದು ನೀಡಲಾದ ಶಾಪಗಳನ್ನು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕವಾದದ್ದೆಂದು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಾನವರು ಪ್ರಬಲರಾಗಬಾರದೆಂಬ ಉದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ದೇವತೆಗಳು ಕೂಡಿದ್ದು ತಪಸ್ವಿಯ ತಪೋಭಂಗವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ ಶಾಪ ಕೊಡುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅವನ ತಪಸ್ಸು ವ್ಯರ್ಥವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ತಪೋಭಂಗ, ವ್ರತಭಂಗ, ಆಜ್ಞಾಭಂಗ, ವಚನಭಂಗ, ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞಾಭಂಗ, ಶೀಲಭಂಗ, ರಾಜ್ಯ–ವಿತ್ತ ಹಾನಿಗಳು, ವಧೆ, ಮೃತ್ಯು, ಜಗಳ, ಹಿಂಸೆ, ಅವಮರ್ಯಾದೆ, ಕಾಮಕೇಲಿ, ಚಾಡಿಕೋರತನ, ಅಲಕ್ಷ್ಯ, ಅವಹೇಳನೆ, ಕರ್ತವ್ಯಚ್ಯುತಿ, ಅಪ್ರಿಯವಾದ ಸತ್ಯ ಹೇಳುವುದು, ರಾಜ್ಯದಾಸೆ, ಪ್ರಣಯಾರಾಧನೆ ಮೊದಲಾದವು ಶಾಪ ನೀಡಲು ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಅಪರಾಧದ ರೂಪ ತಾಳಿ ದಂಡನೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಿಂದ ಗೌರವಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಇದೊಂದು ಮಹತ್ಕೃತಿಯೆಂದು ಕರೆಯುವುದಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಜೀವನ ಪ್ರಣಾಲಿಯ ವಿಶ್ವಕೋಶವೆಂದು ಕರೆದರೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಮಂಜಸವಾಗಿ ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ धर्मे च अर्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ। यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति स तत् क्वचित् ॥ ಎಂಬ ಮಾತು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಆದಿಪರ್ವದ 62ನೇ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಬದುಕಿನ ಅರ್ಥಾನ್ವೇಷಣೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾರಂಭಿಸಿದ ವೇದವ್ಯಾಸರು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಭಾವನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕಾವ್ಯವು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ದೇಹವಾದರೆ ಧರ್ಮವು ಆ ಕೃತಿಯ ಪ್ರಾಣವಾಗಿದೆ. 'धर्मेशास्त्रमिदम् महत् मोक्षशास्त्रमिदं प्रोक्तं व्यासेनामितबुद्धिना धर्मशास्त्रमिदं पुण्यम्' ಇವೇ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮೂಲ ಆಶಯವನ್ನು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

बहुद्वारस्य धर्मस्य नेहास्ति विफलां क्रिया ॥ [शान्ति पर्व–अ १७४, श्लो–२] ಧರ್ಮವು ಎಲ್ಲಡೆ ವಿಹಿತವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಸ್ವರ್ಗಸುಖದ ಸಂಪಾದನೆಗೆ ಸಾಧನವಾಗಿದೆ. ತಪಸ್ಸಿಗೆ, ಸತ್ಫಲಕ್ಕೆ ಆಧಾರಭೂತವಾದ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅನೇಕ ಸ್ವರೂಪಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಧರ್ಮವು ವ್ಯಕ್ತವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಧರ್ಮದ ಆಚರಣೆಯು ಎಂದಿಗೂ ವಿಫಲವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಸಕಲ ಜೀವರಾಶಿಗಳ ಆಭ್ಯುದಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಧರ್ಮದ ಪ್ರವಚನವು ಮಾಡಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಯಾವುದರಿಂದ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ರಾಣಿಗಳಿಗೂ ಶ್ರೇಯಸ್ಸು ಹಾಗೂ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣವುಂಟಾಗುತ್ತದೆಯೋ ಆ ತತ್ತ್ವವೇ ಧರ್ಮವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಧರ್ಮ ಸ್ವರೂಪದ ನಿರ್ಣಯವೇ ವ್ಯಾಸಭಾರತದ ಚರಮ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಧರ್ಮದ ಅರ್ಥ ಹಾಗೂ ಉದ್ದೇಶ – यथाभ्युदय निःश्रेयस सिद्धिः स धर्मः ಎಂದರೆ ಯಾವುದರಿಂದ ಅಭ್ಯುದಯ ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಶ್ರೇಯಸಗಳು ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತವೋ ಅದೇ ಧರ್ಮವೆಂದು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯವು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿದೆ. ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿಯೂ ಕೂಡಾ ಪ್ರಾಯಶಃ ಈ ಧರ್ಮ ತತ್ತ್ವದ ಜಿಜ್ಞಾಸೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವೆಂದು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿದಂತೆ ತೋರುತ್ತದೆ.

धर्मार्थकामाः किल तात लोके समीक्षिता धर्मफलोदयेषु ।
ते तत्र सर्वेस्स्युरसंशयः मे भार्येव वश्याभिमता सुपुत्रा ॥
यस्मिंस्तु सर्वे स्युरसन्निविष्टाः धर्मो यतः स्यात्तदुपक्रमेत ।
द्वेष्यो भवत्यर्थपरो हि लोके कामात्मता खल्वपि ने प्रशस्ता ॥
[वाल्मीकि रामायणम्–अयोध्या – २०]

ಧರ್ಮದ ಏಕೈಕ ಉದ್ದೇಶವು ಪಾಪದ ಉಚ್ಚಾಟನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಾಪ ಜನ್ಯವಾದ ವಿಕೃತಿಯ ನಿರ್ಮೂಲನೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಪಾಪವೆಂಬ ರಜ್ಜುವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಧಿತರಾದ ಜೀವರಾಶಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪಾಪ ಪಂಕದಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆತ್ತಿ ಪವಿತ್ರಗೊಳಿಸಿ ಉದ್ಧಾರ ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ಧರ್ಮದ ಸರ್ವಪ್ರಥಮ ಹಾಗೂ ಸರ್ವೋತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟವಾದ ಉದ್ದೇಶ, ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವು.

ಪುಣ್ಯ–ಪಾಪಗಳೇ ಧರ್ಮಾಧರ್ಮಗಳೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಇಡೀ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಪ ಪುಣ್ಯಗಳ ಧರ್ಮಾಧರ್ಮಗಳ ನಿರಂತರ ಸಂಘರ್ಷವು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಮನುಷ್ಯನಲ್ಲಿ ಆತ್ಮರೋಹಣದ ಅಧಿಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯು ಎಂದಿನಿಂದ ಅವನ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾದುರ್ಭವಿಸಿತೋ ಅಂದಿನಿಂದಲೂ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಪಾಪದ, ಅಧರ್ಮದ ಸಂಕೋಲೆಗಳು ಸುತ್ತಿಕೊಂಡಂತೆ ಭಾಸವಾಗಿದೆ. ಬದುಕಿನ ಸುಮಧುರವಾದ ಪ್ರಯಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಪವೆಂಬ ಹಾಲಾಹಲದ ಲತೆಯು ಕಾಲಿಗೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿ ಎಡವಿದಂತೆ ಪಾಪದ ಗಾಳಿಯು ಬಂದು ಸೇರಿ ಹೋದಂತೆ ಭಾಸವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಮಾನವನ ಸುಂದರವಾದ ಕನಸು, ನಿರ್ಮಲ ಭಾವನೆ, ಸುಕೋಮಲ ಸಂವೇದನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ನಿರ್ಮುಕ್ತವಾದ ಅರಿವಿನ ಪರಿಯನ್ನು ಅಂಧಕಾರದಂತೆ ಆವರಿಸಿದ ಆ ಪಾಪಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯು ಎಲ್ಲೆಡೆ ಪಸರಿಸಿದೆ. ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಶಾಂತಿ, ಸಂಯಮವು ಮರೀಚಿಕೆಯಂತಾಗಿದೆ.
ಯುಗಯುಗಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಹಗೆತನ ಸಾಧಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿರುವ ಪಾಪಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯ ವಿಕೃತವಾದ ರಾಕ್ಷಸೀಯ ಆವೇಶವು ಅಪಾರವಾದ ದುಃಖಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಪಾಪವೆಂಬ ಮಹಾರೋಗಕ್ಕೆ ದಿವ್ಯೌಷಧವಾಗಿ

ಈ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವೆಂಬ ಕಥಾಮೃತದ ಕಲಶವನ್ನು ಹೊತ್ತು ತಂದಿದ್ದು श्रवणतः पापौघः विध्वंसिनी ಎಂದು ಆಗಬೇಕೆಂಬುದೇ ವ್ಯಾಸರ ಮಹಾಭಿಪ್ಸವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಒಂದ ಮತದಿಂದ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಮತಕ್ಕೆ, ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ, ದೇಶದಿಂದ ದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಅಪರಾಧದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯು ಹೇಗೆ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬುದು 'Hasting's Encyclopaedia of religion and ethics' [Vol II] ಎಂಬ ಲೇಖನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳಿದೆ. ವೈದಿಕ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಮಧ್ಯಕಾಲೀನದವರೆಗೆ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧದ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಪ್ರಗತಿಯು ಹೇಗೆ ಉಂಟಾಯಿತೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಯುವುದು ಅತ್ಯವಶ್ಯಕ.

ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧ ಹಾಗೂ ಋತದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆ –

ಮಾನವ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಸರ್ವಪ್ರಥಮ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಗ್ರಂಥವಾದ ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಈ ಪಾಪ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಯ ಮೂಲವನ್ನು ಬಗೆಯುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಾಪಾಚರಣೆಯ ಪಾಶಗಳನ್ನು ಶಿಥಿಲಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಸನ್ನಾಹವು ನಡೆದಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಪಾಪಿಗಳನ್ನು ಋಗ್ವೇದೀಯ ಋಷಿಗಳು ದಸ್ಯುಗಳೆಂದು ಕರೆದು ನಿಂದ್ಯರೆಂದು ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನು ಲಕ್ಷಣದೊಂದಿಗೆ ವಿವರಿಸುವುದು ಕಷ್ಟಕರ ಕಾರ್ಯ. ದೇವ ಅಥವಾ ದೇವವಾಣಿಯಿಂದ ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಕಾನೂನು ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆಯ ಒಂದು ಸ್ವಚ್ಛಂದವಾದ ನಡತೆಯೆಂದು ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾದ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಭಗವಂತನ ಇಚ್ಛೆಗೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧವಾಗಿರುವುದೇ ಅಪರಾಧವೆಂದು ಅಧಿಕಾರಯುಕ್ತವಾದ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಪಡಿಸಿದೆ.

ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯು ಸತ್ಯದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸತ್ಯವೆಂದರೇನು ಎಂಬುದರ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನರಿಯುವುದು ಅತ್ಯವಶ್ಯಕವಾಗಿದೆ. ಋತವೆಂದರೆ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿಯ ನಡವಳಿಕೆ ಅಥವಾ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದ ಸುವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಿತ ರಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಧಿಬದ್ಧವಾದ ಮತ್ತು ಸರ್ವಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾದ ಆಜ್ಞೆಯೆಂದೂ, ಯಜ್ಞಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಧರ್ಮಪಂಥ ಆರಾಧನ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯ ಒಂದು ಸರಿಯಾದ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಜ್ಞೆಯ ದಾರಿಯೆಂದೂ ಮಾನವನ ನೈತಿಕ ನಡತೆ ಎಂದೂ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ವಿಶ್ವದಾದ್ಯಂತ ಋತದ ಪ್ರಭಾವವು ಎಲ್ಲೆಡೆ ಉಸಿರಾಟವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು ಅಧಿಕ ತೇಜಸ್ಸು ಹಾಗೂ ಕಾಂತಿಯು ಇದರಲ್ಲೇ ಸೇರಿಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಋತದ ಚಿಂತನೆ ಅನೇಕಾನೇಕ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ನಾಶಪಡಿಸುವುದಲ್ಲದೆ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಮಾನವಾದ, ಪುರಿದುಂಬಿಸುವ ಋತದ ಪ್ರಶಂಸೆಯ ಮಂತ್ರಗಳು ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಜಡ್ಡುಗಟ್ಟಿದ ಕರ್ಣಗಳನ್ನು ಬಲವಂತದಿಂದ ಭೇದಿಸಿ ಒಳಸೇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಋತದ ಮೂಲಕ ಜನರು ಆಹಾರವನ್ನು ಬಯಸುವವರಾಗಿದ್ದು ಋತವನ್ನು ಗೆದ್ದವನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಆ ಆಹಾರವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಋತದಿಂದಲೇ ಭೂಮಿ, ಸ್ವರ್ಗವು ಎಲ್ಲರ ಆಕಾಂಕ್ಷೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ಣಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೆಲವು ವಾಕ್ಯಗಳು 'ऋतं सिन्धवो वरुणस्य यान्ति' [ऋ–II.28.4] ನದಿಗಳು ವರುಣನ ಋತುವನ್ನೇ ಅನುಸರಿಸುತ್ತದೆಯೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಸ್ವರ್ಗದ ಪುತ್ರಿಯಾದ ಮುಂಬೆಳಕು ಸತ್ಯದ ಮಾರ್ಗವನ್ನೇ ಅನುಸರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ऋतस्य पन्थानं – अन्वेति साधु [ऋ–I.123.9] ಋತದ ಮಾರ್ಗವು ಕಿರಣದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿಹೋಗಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಋತ ಪದವು ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕ ಬಾರಿ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತದೆ.

ವೈದಿಕ ದೇವಮಂದಿರದ ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ದೇವತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸತ್ಯದ ಪೋಷಕನೆಂದೂ, ಸಾರಥಿಯೆಂದೂ ವರ್ಣಿಸಿದೆ. ಸತ್ಯ ಅಥವಾ ಋತದಿಂದಲೇ ಮಿತ್ರ ಹಾಗೂ ವರುಣರು ವಿಶ್ವವನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಆಳುತ್ತಾರೆ ಎಂದು ಋಗ್ವೇದವು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. [ऋतेन विश्वं भुवनं वै राजन्तः] ಮಿತ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ವರುಣರು ಸತ್ಯದ ರಕ್ಷಕರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಸತ್ಯದ ಸಾರಥಿಗಳೆಂದು ಕರೆಯಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಅಪರಾಧಗಳ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣ – ಅಪರಾಧ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳ ಎಣಿಕೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಾಪದ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣವು ಬಹಳ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ಇದು ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧದ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಏಳೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಪರಿಮಿತಿಯನ್ನುಂಟುಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮನುಷ್ಯನು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ

ಯಾವುದಾದರೊಂದನ್ನು ಮೀರಿದರೂ ಅಪರಾಧಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಿರುಕ್ತವು [೬–೨೭] ಏಳು ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಸೂಚಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಕಳ್ಳತನ, ಗುರುವಿನ ಶಯ್ಯೆಯ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆ, ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಹತ್ಯೆ, ಭ್ರೂಣಹತ್ಯೆ, ಮದ್ಯಪಾನ, ಪಾಪಕಾರ್ಯದ ಪುನರಾವರ್ತನೆ, ಅಪರಾಧ ವಿಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಸತ್ಯ ನುಡಿಯುವುದು ಇವು ಏಳು ವಿಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಋಗ್ವೇದವು ೭.೮೬.೬ ಸುರಾಪಾನ ಹಾಗೂ ಜೂಜನ್ನು ಅಪರಾಧವೆಂದು ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಿದರೆ ತೈತ್ತಿರೀಯ ಸಂಹಿತೆ, ಶತಪಥ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಗಳು ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಹತ್ಯೆಯು ಎಲ್ಲ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳಿಗಿಂತಲೂ ಮಹತ್ತರ ಅಪರಾಧವೆಂದು ವೈದಿಕ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿತ್ತೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಹತ್ಯೆಗಿಂತಲೂ ಭ್ರೂಣಹತ್ಯೆಯು ಬಹಳ ನೀಚವಾದ ಕಾರ್ಯವೆಂದು ಕಾಠಕಸಂಹಿತೆಯು ೩೧.೭ರಲ್ಲಿ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ವರ್ಗದಲ್ಲೂ ಪಾಪಗಳ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣ ಹಾಗೂ ಗಣನೆಯು ಬೇರೆಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನು ಅನೇಕ ಪದಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳದಿದ್ದರೂ ಮಹಾಪಾತಕದ ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಸೇರಿಹೋಗಿದ್ದು ಮಹಾಪಾತಕಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಮಾನವಾದ ದಂಡನೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಮೃತಿಗಳು ಹೇಳುತ್ತವೆ ಹಾಗೆ ಉಪಪಾತಕಗಳು ಸ್ಮೃತಿಯಿಂದ ಸ್ಮೃತಿಗೆ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬೇರೆಯೇ ಅಗುತ್ತದೆ. ತಪ್ಪೊಪ್ಪಿಗೆ, ಪಶ್ಚಾತ್ತಾಪ, ಪ್ರಾಣಾಯಾಮ, ತಪಸ್ಸು, ಹೋಮ, ಜಪ, ತಪ, ದಾನ, ಉಪವಾಸ, ತೀರ್ಥಯಾತ್ರೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಅಪರಾಧಕ್ಕೆ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ಅನಂತರದ ಫಲವನ್ನು ಕಡಿಮೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ವಿಧಾನಗಳಾಗಿವೆ.

ಶಾಪಗಳು–ಧರ್ಮದ ಪಾಲನೆ, ಅಧರ್ಮಗಳ ನಿವಾರಣೆ, ಸಮಾಜದ ಆರೋಗ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಾಧೆ ತಟ್ಟಬಾರದೆಂದು ನೀಡಲಾದ ಶಾಪಗಳನ್ನು ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕವಾದದ್ದೆಂದು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಾನವರು ಪ್ರಬಲರಾಗಬಾರದೆಂಬ ಉದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ದೇವತೆಗಳು ಕೂಡಿದ್ದು ತಪಸ್ವಿಯ ತಪೋಭಂಗವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ ಶಾಪ ಕೊಡುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅವನ ತಪಸ್ಸು ವ್ಯರ್ಥವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ತಪೋಭಂಗ, ವ್ರತಭಂಗ, ಆಜ್ಞಾಭಂಗ, ವಚನಭಂಗ, ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞಾಭಂಗ, ಶೀಲಭಂಗ, ರಾಜ್ಯ–ವಿತ್ತ ಹಾನಿಗಳು, ವಧೆ, ಮೃತ್ಯು, ಜಗಳ, ಹಿಂಸೆ, ಅವಮರ್ಯಾದೆ, ಕಾಮಕೇಲಿ, ಚಾಡಿಕೋರತನ, ಅಲಕ್ಷ್ಯ, ಅವಹೇಳನೆ, ಕರ್ತವ್ಯಚ್ಯುತಿ, ಅಪ್ರಿಯವಾದ ಸತ್ಯ ಹೇಳುವುದು, ರಾಜ್ಯದಾಸೆ, ಪ್ರಣಯಾರಾಧನೆ ಮೊದಲಾದವು ಶಾಪ ನೀಡಲು ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಅಪರಾಧದ ರೂಪ ತಾಳಿ ದಂಡನೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಯಯಾತಿ, ಜಮದಗ್ನಿಯರು ತಮ್ಮ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಕೇಳಲಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಕಠೋರವಾಗಿ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಶುಕ್ರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಶಾಪದಿಂದ ಯಯಾತಿಯು ಅಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ವೃದ್ಧನಾಗಲು ತನ್ನ ಕಾಮವನ್ನು ಪೂರೈಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಮಕ್ಕಳಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ವೃದ್ಧತ್ವವನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಸಾವಿರ ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಅದಲು ಬದಲು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಯಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ತನ್ನೊಂದಿಗೆ ತನ್ನ ಮುಪ್ಪನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಪುರುವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಉಳಿದ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸಿ ಬಿಡುವನೆಂದರೆ ಅವನ ಕಾಮೇಚ್ಛೆಯು ಏನನ್ನಾದರೂ ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರೇರಿಪಿಸುತ್ತದೆಂದೇ ಅರ್ಥ. ಕಾಮವು ಮನುಷ್ಯನನ್ನು ಯಾವ ದುಷ್ಟಕಾರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರೇರಣೆ ನೀಡುತ್ತದೆಯೆಂದರೆ ಅಪರಾಧವು ಸಂಭವಿಸಿದಂತೆಯೆ. ಜಮದಗ್ನಿಯು ತನ್ನ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ತಾಯಿಯ ಶಿರಚ್ಛೇದ ಮಾಡಲು ಒಪ್ಪದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಮಂದಬುದ್ಧಿಗಳಾಗುವಂತೆ ಶಪಿಸಿ ಬಿಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕಹೋಡ ಋಷಿಯು ದಿನಪೂರ್ಣ ವೇದಗಳನ್ನು ಪಠಿಸುತ್ತಿರಲು ತಾಯಿಯ ಗರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಶಿಶುವು ದಿನನಿತ್ಯವೂ ಸದಾಕಾಲ ವೇದಪಠನೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ದೋಷವು ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತದೆಯೆಂದು ಹಾಗೆ ಮಾಡಬಾರದೆಂದು ತಂದೆಗೆ ಹೇಳಿದಾಗ, ಗರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿರುವಾಗಲೇ ತಂದೆಯ ತಪ್ಪನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟನೆಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅಷ್ಟಾವಕ್ರನಾಗೆಂದು ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಮುಂದೆ ತನ್ನ ಅಹಂಕಾರದಿಂದಲೇ ವಾದದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಾಜಯ ಹೊಂದುವ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಬೃಹಸ್ಪತಿಯು ತನ್ನ ಅತ್ತಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಬಲವಂತದಿಂದ ಸಂಭೋಗಿಸಲು ಬಯಸಿ ಅವಳ ಗರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಉತಥ್ಯನ ಮಗು ಅವನನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ದ್ರೋಣನು ಪಾಂಡವರಿಂದ ಕೊಲ್ಲಲ್ಪಡಲು ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾಮನು ಇಡೀ ಪಾಂಡವ ಕುಲವನ್ನೇ ನಾಶಪಡಿಸುವೆನೆಂದು ನಿಶ್ಚಯಿಸಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಶಿರಾಸ್ತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಉತ್ತರೆಯ ಗರ್ಭವನ್ನು ನಾಶಪಡಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣನು ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾಮನಿಗೆ

ಮೂರು ಸಾವಿರ ವರ್ಷಗಳವರೆಗೆ ಕೀವು ರಕ್ತದಿಂದ ದುರ್ಗಂಧದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದ ಶರೀರದಿಂದ ಅಲೆದಾಡುವೆ ಎಂಬ ಶಾಪ ನೀಡಲು ಭ್ರೂಣ ಹತ್ಯೆಗೆ ಕ್ರೂರ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನೆ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಬಾಲ್ಯಾವಸ್ಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಂಡವ್ಯ ಋಷಿಯು ಕಡ್ಡಿಯಿಂದ ಪಕ್ಷಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಚುಚ್ಚಿ ತೊಂದರೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಯಮನಿಂದ ಮರಣ ದಂಡನೆಯ ಶಾಪವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಬಾಲ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಸಣ್ಣ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಮರಣ ದಂಡನೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆ ನೀಡಿದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಯಮಧರ್ಮನು ಶೂದ್ರ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟುವ ಶಾಪ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯಮನು ಅಲ್ಪಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆ ನೀಡಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಮನುಷ್ಯನಾಗಿ ಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕಾರ್ತ್ಯವೀರ್ಯಾರ್ಜುನನು ಮದೋನ್ಮತ್ತನಾಗಿ ಜಮದಗ್ನಿಯ ಹೋಮಧೇನುವನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿ ಕ್ರುದ್ಧನಾದ ಜಾಮದಗ್ನಿಯಿಂದ ನಾಶ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನಲ್ಲದೆ ಅವನ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಹತ್ಯಾ ದೋಷಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಜಾಮದಗ್ನಿಯಿಂದಲೇ ಕೊಲ್ಲಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ರೈಭ್ಯನು ತಪ್ಪು ಮಾಡಿದ ಯವಕ್ರೀತನಿಗೆ ಮರಣದಂಡನೆ ವಿಧಿಸಲು ಕೋಪಗೊಂಡ ತಂದೆ ಭಾರದ್ವಾಜನು ಪುತ್ರಪ್ರೇಮದಿಂದ ರೈಭ್ಯನಿಗೆ ಶಾಪ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಹತ್ಯೆಗೆ ರೈಭ್ಯನು ಮರಣವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನಾದರೂ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಕಾರಣ ಅಪರಾಧವು ಕಡಿಮೆ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದುದರಿಂದ ಪುತ್ರ ಅರ್ವಾವಸುವಿನ ಅನುಗ್ರಹದಿಂದ ಪುನಃ ಜೀವ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಪ್ರಣಯಾರಾಧನೆಯ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ನ ಪ್ರಿಯನಿಂದ ಸರಿಯಾದ ಪ್ರತಿಸ್ಪಂದನೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದದ ಕಾರಣ ಘಾಸಿಗೊಂಡು, ಕೆರಳಿ ಅವಮಾನದಿಂದ ಕುದ್ದ ದೇವಯಾನಿ, ಊರ್ವಶಿಯರು ಕಚ, ಅರ್ಜುನನಿಗೆ ಶಾಪ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಪ್ರಣಯದ ಕರೆಯನ್ನು ಇಬ್ಬರೂ ಪ್ರೋತ್ಸಾಹಿಸದ ಕಾರಣ ನಿರಪರಾಧಿಗಳಾದ ಕಚ, ಅರ್ಜುನರು ಕಠಿಣ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಶಂತನುವಿನ ಪುತ್ರ ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಅನುಜನಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಾಶಿ ರಾಜಪುತ್ರಿಯರನ್ನು ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಕರೆತರಲು ಅಂಬೆ ತಾನು ಸಾಲ್ವರಾಜನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಸಕ್ತಳಾಗಿರುವುದನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸಲು ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿ ಕಳಿಸಿಕೊಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸ್ವಯಂವರದ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಏನನ್ನೂ ಹೇಳದೆ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನೇ ಮದುವೆಯಾಗಬೇಕೆಂದು ಹಠ ಹಿಡಿದು, ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗದೆ ಇದ್ದಾಗ ಅವನ ನಾಶಕ್ಕೆ ಪಣ ತೊಟ್ಟು ಮುಂದಿನ ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಯುದ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿಖಂಡಿಯಾಗಿ ಭೀಷ್ಮನ ನಾಶಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣಳಾಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಪಾಂಡವರು ಅನೇಕ ಅಪರಾಧ ಮಾಡಿದ ಕೌರವರನ್ನು ಆರಂಭದಿಂದಲೂ ಸಹಿಸಿ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಅವರ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳು ಮಿತಿಮೀರಲು ಧಾರ್ತ್ರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರರನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ನಾಶಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಪುತ್ರ ಶೋಕದಿಂದ ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಯು ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರನೇ ಎಲ್ಲದಕ್ಕೂ ಕಾರಣವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದು ಶಪಿಸಲು ಸಿದ್ಧಳಾಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಯೇ ಹೇಳಿದ 'यतो धर्मस्ततो जयः' ಎಂಬ ಮಾತನ್ನು ಸ್ಮರಣೆಗೆ ತರಲು ಧರ್ಮಜನನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸದೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟಳದರೂ ಅವಳ ಪುತ್ರಶೋಕದ ಕೋಪ ಧರ್ಮಜನ ಹೆಬ್ಬೆರಳಿನ ಉಗುರನ್ನು ಕಪ್ಪಾಗಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೋಪವೂ ಶಾಪದ ಒಂದು ರೂಪವಷ್ಟೆ. ಆ ಕೋಪದಿಂದಲೇ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮನಾದ, ವೇದಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಜ್ಞನಾದ, ಆದಿ-ಅಂತ್ಯವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಆದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನೇ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆಂದರೆ ಆ ಶಾಪವು ಅಪರಾಧವಲ್ಲದೆ ಮತ್ತೇನಾಗಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯ? ಯಾದವ ವಂಶವೇ ನಶಿಸಲಿಯೆಂದರೆ ಅಧರ್ಮದ ನಿರ್ಮೂಲನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಅಪರಾಧವೇ?

ಕುಂತಿಯು ಕರ್ಣನು ತನ್ನ ಮಗನೆಂದು ಮೊದಲೇ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದರೆ ಬಹುದೊಡ್ಡ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಹಾರವನ್ನೇ ತಡೆಯಬಹುದಿತ್ತೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದು, ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನು ತಪ್ಪು ಮಾಡಿದ ಕುಂತಿಯನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸದೆ ಇಡೀ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಕುಲವನ್ನೇ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆಂದರೆ ಧರ್ಮಜನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸೂಕ್ತವೆಂಬುದು ಚಿಂತನೀಯ. ಉದ್ದಾಲಕನ ಪೂಜಾ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿಗಳು ಹೊಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಚ್ಚಿಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಗ ಅದನ್ನು ಹೊರತರಲಾಗದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಮಗನನ್ನು ಯಮಸದನಕ್ಕೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ತನ್ನಿಚ್ಛೆಯಂತೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಸಾಧನೆಯಾಗಲಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬ ಒಂದೇ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಪುತ್ರನನ್ನೇ ಯಮಪುರಿಗೆ ಕಳುಹಿಸುವ ಈ ಘೋರ ಶಾಪವು ಅಪರಾಧವಲ್ಲದೆ ಮತ್ತೇನಾಗುವುದು. ಪೌಷ್ಯರಾಜನು ಉತ್ತಂಕನಿಗೆ ಆಹಾರವನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದಾಗ ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂದಲಿದ್ದು ಉತ್ತಂಕನು ತನಗೆ ದೋಷಯುಕ್ತ ಆಹಾರ ಕೊಡಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿತೆಂದಾಗ ರಾಜನು ಅದನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪದೆ ವಿನಾಕಾರಣ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಕಾರಣವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ತನ್ನದೆ ತಪ್ಪಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಬೇರೆಯವರನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸುವುದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸಮಂಜಸ.

ಭೃಗುವಿನ ಪತ್ನಿ ಪುಲೋಮೆಯು ಗರ್ಭವತಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದಾಗ ಅವಳ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯದಿಂದ ಆಕರ್ಷಿತನಾದ ಪುಲೋಮ ರಾಕ್ಷಸನು ಹಿಂದೆ ಅವಳನ್ನು ವರಿಸಿದ್ದೆನೆಂದು ಚಿಂತಿಸಿ ಅಪಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆಯಾದರೂ ಗರ್ಭವು ಕೆಳಗೆ ಬಿದ್ದು ಆ ರಾಕ್ಷಸನನ್ನು ಭಸ್ಮ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಗ್ನಿಯೇ ಪುಲೋಮನಿಗೆ ಸತ್ಯ ಹೇಳಿರುವನೆಂದು ಬಗೆದು ಭೃಗುವು ಅಗ್ನಿಗೆ ಸರ್ವಭಕ್ಷಕನಾಗುವಂತೆ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಸತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವ ಅಗ್ನಿಯು ಭಯಂಕರವಾದ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ವಸಿಷ್ಠರ ಹೋಮಧೇನುವು ಅಷ್ಟವಸುಗಳಿಂದ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗಿ 'ದ್ಯು' ಎಂಬ ವಸುವಿನಿಂದ ಅಪಹರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಾಗ ಕ್ರೋಧದಿಂದ ವಸಿಷ್ಠರು ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಮಾನವ ಯೋನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನ್ಮಿಸುವಂತೆ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಒಬ್ಬನ ದುರಾಸೆಗೆ ಉಳಿದ ವಸುಗಳು ಶಾಪದಿಂದ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಗೊಳಗಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ದ್ಯು ವಸುವು ಮುಂದೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಾಗಿ ಜೀವನಪೂರ್ತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಸೌಖ್ಯ ವಿಹೀನನಾಗಿ ಬಾಳ್ವೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ದಮಯಂತಿಯು ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಸ್ವಭಾವಕ್ಕನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ನಳನ ಗುಣ, ಪರಾಕ್ರಮ, ರೂಪ ವೈಭವಗಳಿಂದ ಆಕರ್ಷಿತಳಾಗಿ ಅವನಿಗೇ ವರಮಾಲೆ ಹಾಕಿದ್ದು ಸ್ವಾಭಾವಿಕವಾಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಕಲಿಯು ನಳನನ್ನು ಬಹುವಾಗಿ ಪೀಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನಲ್ಲದೆ ದಮಯಂತಿಯ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾಗಿ ಅನೇಕ ದಿನಗಳ ಕಾಲ ನಳನ ಶರೀರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದು ನರಕ ಸದೃಶವಾದ ದುಃಖವನ್ನನುಭವಿಸುವನು.

ಹೀಗೆ ಸಾವು, ನಾಶ, ಕೀಳ್ಮಟ್ಟದ ಜನ್ಮ, ದೇಹ ವಿಕೃತಿ, ಹೀನಾವಸ್ಥೆ, ಸಂತತಿನಾಶ, ತಮ್ಮವರಿಂದ ದೂರವಾಗುವುದು ಕಾಮದ ವಾಸನೆ ಈಡೇರದಿರುವುದು, ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು, ಅಕಾಲಿಕ ಮುಪ್ಪು, ಸ್ವರ್ಗಸೃಷ್ಟಿ, ಸ್ವರ್ಗ ಪಡೆಯುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಡೆ-ತಡೆ, ವಂಚನೆ ಮೊದಲಾದವುಗಳು ಶಾಪಗಳ ಹಲವು ಬಗೆಯ ಪರಿಣಾಮಗಳಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅದೇ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳಿಗೂ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯಾಗಿ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸುತ್ತದೆ.

ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದ ಉದ್ದೇಶ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ – ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ಸತ್ಯವು ಬಹಳ ಉನ್ನತವಾದ ಸ್ಥಾನವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದು ಸತ್ಯ, ಅಸತ್ಯವೆರಡು ಒಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಚಲಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಋಗ್ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಋತದ ಕಲ್ಪನೆಯು ಗಂಭೀರವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅದೇ ಧರ್ಮತತ್ತ್ವದ ನಿಯಮಕ್ಕೆ ಬೀಜರೂಪವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗಿರಲು ಮನುಷ್ಯನು ಸತ್ಯವನ್ನು ನುಡಿಯಬೇಕೇ ಹೊರತು ಅಸತ್ಯವನ್ನಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಶತಪಥ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣವು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಸತ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಧರ್ಮವು ಕಾರ್ಯರೂಪದ ಜೀವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದೇ ಆಗಿದೆಯೆಂದು ಬೃಹದಾರಣ್ಯಕವು ಹೇಳಿದರೆ ಸತ್ಯವೇ ಸದಾ ಜಯವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತದೆಯೆಂದೂ ದೇವತೆಗಳ ಮಾರ್ಗವೂ ಸತ್ಯವೇ ಆಗಿದೆಯೆಂದೂ ಮುಂಡಕೋಪನಿಷತ್ತು ಹೇಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಸದಾಕಾಲವು ಮನುಷ್ಯನು ತನ್ನ ಅಂತರಾತ್ಮವನ್ನು ತೃಪ್ತಿಪಡಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದರೆ ಅದು ಸತ್ಯದಿಂದ ಮಾತ್ರ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಪರಲೋಕದಲ್ಲೂ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಜೊತೆಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸತ್ಯದ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆಗೆ ಅಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮದ ಜ್ಞಾನವು ಅವಶ್ಯಕವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅದರಿಂದ ದಯೆ, ಅಹಿಂಸೆ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಗುಣಗಳನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿದ್ದು ತಾನೂ ಸಂತೋಷವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಇತರರು ಸಂತೋಷವಾಗಿರಬೇಕೆಂದು ಬಯಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯಾವುದು ತನಗೆ ಇಷ್ಟವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೋ ಅದು ಅನ್ಯರಿಗೂ ಹಿತವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂಬ ಸತ್ಯವನ್ನರಿತು ನಡೆದುಕೊಂಡರೆ ಅದೇ ಧರ್ಮವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಧರ್ಮವೇ ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಜೀವನವನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಸುವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಗೆ ಒಳಪಡಿಸಿ ಒಬ್ಬ ಸತ್ಪ್ರಜೆಯನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಕಾರ್ಯ ಮಾಡಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಸರ್ವಾಂಗೀಣ ಬೆಳವಣಿಗೆಗೆ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ ರೂಪವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲೂ ಧರ್ಮವು ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಸ್ಥಾನವನ್ನಲಂಕರಿಸಿದ್ದು ಅದರಿಂದಲೇ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳು ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದಲೇ ಅನೇಕ ಗ್ರಂಥಕಾರರು ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದು ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಉಪದೇಶವು ಮಹತ್ವವು ಒಂದೇ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಧರ್ಮದ ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳು–

वेदोक्तः परमो धर्मो धर्मशास्त्रेषु चापरः ।
शिष्टाचारश्चशिष्टानां त्रिविधं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥ [वनपर्व–अ–२००७ श्लो–८२]
सदाचारः स्मृतिर्वेदास्त्रिविधं धर्मलक्षणम् ।

चतुर्थमर्थमित्याहुः कवयो धर्मलक्षणम्॥ [शान्ति–अ–२५९, श्लो–३]
वेटस्मृतिः सदाचारःस्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः ।
एतश्चतुर्विधं प्राहुः साक्षाद्धर्मस्य लक्षणम् ॥ [मनु–अ–२–श्लो–१२]
अर्थकामेष्टसक्तानां धर्मं ज्ञानं विधीयते।
धर्मं जिज्ञासामानानां प्रमाणं परमं शृति ॥ [मनु–अ–२, श्लो–१३]
धारणात् धर्ममित्याहुः धर्मो धारयते प्रजाः ।
यत् स्याद् धारणसंयुक्त स धर्म इति निश्चयः ॥
[कर्ण–अ–६९, श्लो–५८]

ಧರ್ಮವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಬಂದಂಥ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಸ್ಮೃತಿಗಳು – ಗೌತಮಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಬೌಧಾಯನ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಅಪಸ್ತಂಭ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ವಸಿಷ್ಠ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ವಿಷ್ಣು ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಹಾರೀತ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಶಂಖಲಿಖಿತ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ, ಮನುಸ್ಮೃತಿ, ಯಾಜ್ಞವಲ್ಕ್ಯಸ್ಮೃತಿ, ಪರಾಶರಸ್ಮೃತಿ, ನಾರದಸ್ಮೃತಿ.

ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯಗಳು – ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ವಿಚಾರವನ್ನೊಳಗೊಂಡ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ, ರಾಮಾಯಣವು ಭಾರತೀಯರ ಪವಿತ್ರ ಗ್ರಂಥವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಮಧ್ಯಮಕಾಲೀನ ಹಾಗೂ ಅನಂತರದ ಕೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಯುಕ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ. ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಅರ್ಥಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ, ಕಾಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಹಾಗೂ ಮೋಕ್ಷಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನಾಗಿ ರಚನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದೊಂದು ವಿಶ್ವಜ್ಞಾನಕೋಶವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಮುಂದಿನ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಿಗೆ ಉತ್ತೇಜನ ನೀಡುವ ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದನ್ನು, ಜಯ, ಸಂಹಿತೆ, ಪುರಾಣ, ಆಖ್ಯಾನ, ಇತಿಹಾಸ, ಇತಿಹಾಸೋತ್ತಮ ಕಾವ್ಯ, ಕಾರ್ಷ್ಣವೇದವೆಂದು ಕರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಶಾಂತಿ, ಅನುಶಾಸನ, ಅಶ್ವಮೇದಿಕ, ವನ, ಸ್ತ್ರೀ, ಉದ್ಯೋಗ, ಸಭಾ, ಆಶ್ರಮವಾಸಿಕ ಪರ್ವಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಧರ್ಮಶಾಸ್ತ್ರದ ವಿಚಾರಗಳು ಹೇಳಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಕ್ರಿ.ಶ. ಏಳನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನಕ್ಕೂ ಪೂರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ರಚಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಹತ್ತೊಂಬತ್ತನೆ ಶತಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಞಾನ ವೃದ್ಧಿಗಾಗಿ ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಠಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿತು. ಚತುರ್ಯುಗಗಳ ಸ್ವರೂಪ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಯಲ್ಲದೆ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ, ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯ, ವೈಶ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಶೂದ್ರ ಧರ್ಮಗಳ ವಿವೇಚನೆಯು ಶಾಂತಿಧರ್ಮಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಧಾರಾಳವಾಗಿ ಸಿಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿನ ಅಪರಾಧದ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳು – ಮಾನವನ ಹೃದಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಧರ್ಮವು ಕ್ಷೀಣಿಸಲಾರಂಭಿಸಿದರೆ ಅಧರ್ಮವು ತಾನೇ ತಾನಾಗಿ ಭೂಮಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಪ್ರಾದುರ್ಭವಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಧರ್ಮದಿಂದಲೇ ಅಶಾಂತಿ, ದುಃಖ, ನೋವು, ಸಂಕಟಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ದೈಹಿಕ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಬದುಕು, ಪರಿಸರ ಮೊದಲಾದವುಗಳು ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸುತ್ತವೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಾದರೋ ಅಂತಹ ಪರಿಸರದ ಅನೇಕ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳು ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತವೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಅನೇಕ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಮಾನಸಿಕ, ದೈಹಿಕ ಬಲದಿಂದ ಕುಗ್ಗಿದ್ದು ಕ್ರೋಧ, ಹಠ, ಛಲದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿ ಅನೇಕ ರೀತಿಯ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಒಮ್ಮೆ ತಿಳಿದೋ ತಿಳಿಯದೆಯೋ ಮಾಡಿದ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳು ಮುಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇಚ್ಛಾಪೂರ್ವಕವಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಘೋರ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳಿಂದ ಧನಹಾನಿ, ವಿದ್ಯಾಹಾನಿ, ಮಾನಹಾನಿ, ಜ್ಞಾನಹಾನಿ, ಜೀವಹಾನಿಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಹಾನಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುವ ಅನೇಕ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಆಖ್ಯಾನೋಪಾಖ್ಯಾನ ರೂಪಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾನವರು ಅನೇಕ ಪುಣ್ಯಕಾರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೋಕ್ಷ ಸುಖವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದರೂ ಕಾಲಕ್ರಮೇಣ ಪುಣ್ಯವು ನಶಿಸಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಬೀಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಮಹಾಭಿಷನು ಯಜ್ಞ ಯಾಗಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ ದಿವ್ಯಲೋಕವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದರೂ ದೇವಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗಂಗೆಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಕಾಮಾಸಕ್ತನಾಗಿ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಶಂತನುವಾಗಿ ಭೂಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದೇವವ್ರತನೆಂಬ ಬೆಳೆದ ಮಗನಿದ್ದರೂ ಮತ್ಸ್ಯಗಂಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೋಹಗೊಂಡು ಪುತ್ರನು ಆಜೀವಪರ್ಯಂತ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಚಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಉಳಿಯುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆಂದರೆ ಅದೂ ಅಪರಾಧವೇ ಆಗುವುದೆಂಬುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಶಯವಿಲ್ಲ.

'ದ್ಯು' ಎಂಬ ವಸುವು ವಸಿಷ್ಠರ ಹೋಮಧೇನುವನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಗೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಭೂಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಿಸಿ ವಿಚಿತ್ರವೀರ್ಯನಿಗೆ ವಿವಾಹ ಮಾಡುವ ಇಚ್ಛೆಯಿಂದ ಕಾಶೀರಾಜ ಪುತ್ರಿಯರನ್ನು ಅನುಮತಿ ಪಡೆಯದೆ ಕರೆತರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯ ಧರ್ಮದಂತೆ ಗೆದ್ದವನು ವಿವಾಹವಾಗಬೇಕು. ಅಂಬೆಯು ಭೀಷ್ಮನು

ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ಸರಿಯಲ್ಲ ಅನುಮತಿಯಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಅಪಹರಿಸಿದ ಕಾರಣ ಭೀಷ್ಮನೇ ವಿವಾಹವಾಗಬೇಕೆಂದು ಪಟ್ಟುಹಿಡಿದು ಆಸೆ ನೆರವೇರದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಹಿಡಿಂಬೆಯಾಗಿ ಜನ್ಮಿಸಿ ತನ್ನ ಸೇಡನ್ನು ತೀರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಮವೇ ಪ್ರಧಾನವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರನು ಅಜನ್ಮ ಕುರುಡನಾಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೂ ಬಲವಂತದಿಂದಲೇ ಪಾಂಡುವಿಗೆ ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಮೇಲಿನ ಮೋಹದಿಂದ ಅವನು ಮಾಡಿದ ತಪ್ಪನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅನುಮೋದಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದು ಮಹತ್ತರ ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಪರಾಧಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕವೂ ಅಪರಾಧವೆಂದು ಸ್ಮೃತಿಗಳೇ ಹೇಳುತ್ತವೆ.

ಪಾಂಡು ರಾಜನು ರಾಜ್ಯಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಗೆದ್ದು ಸಂಪತ್ತು, ಸ್ಥಾನ, ಅಧಿಕಾರದ ಮದದಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿ ವಿಹಾರಾರ್ಥವಾಗಿ ಹೋಗಿ ಮದದಿಂದ ಒಬ್ಬ ಋಷಿಯ ನಾಶಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗಿ, ಮಹಾಪರಾಧವನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡಿ ಋಷಿಯ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದ್ರೋಣ, ದ್ರುಪದರು ಬಾಲ್ಯ ಸ್ನೇಹಿತರಾಗಿದ್ದು ಕಾಲಕಳೆದಂತೆ ದ್ರುಪದನು ದ್ರೋಣರ ಬಡತನಕ್ಕೆ ಅವರನ್ನು ಹೀಯಾಳಿಸಿ ಅವಮಾನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕ್ರುದ್ಧರಾದ ದ್ರೋಣರು ಸೇಡು ತೀರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಯಸಿ ಹಸ್ತಿನಾವತಿಗೆ ಬಂದು ನೆಲೆ ನಿಂತು ವೇದಾಭ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ದ್ವೇಷ, ಪ್ರತೀಕಾರವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಪರಶುರಾಮನು ತನ್ನ ಸಂಪಾದನೆಯನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ದಾನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗ ಸಂಪತ್ತಿನ ಆಸೆಯಿಂದ ದ್ರೋಣರೂ ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆಂದರೆ ಹಣದ ಮೋಹ ಎಷ್ಟಿತ್ತೆಂಬುದು ತಿಳಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಅರ್ಜುನನಿಗೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಮಾತನ್ನುಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಏಕಲವ್ಯನ ಹೆಬ್ಬೆರಳನ್ನೇ ಗುರುದಕ್ಷಿಣೆಯಾಗಿ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ. ದ್ರುಪದನಿಂದಾದ ಅವಮಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಸಹಾಯದಿಂದ ದ್ರುಪದನನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿ ಹಿಡಿದೆಳೆದು ತಂದು ತನಗಾದ ಅವಮಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರತೀಕಾರ ತೀರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರಲ್ಲದೆ ಋಣದ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಧರ್ಮದ ಸೇವೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಕಳಂಕದೊಂದಿಗೆ ಅಂತ್ಯ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ಸೂರ್ಯಪುತ್ರ ಕರ್ಣನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯು ತನ್ನನ್ನು ತಿರಸ್ಕರಿಸಿದಳೆಂದು ಅವಳನ್ನು ದ್ವೇಷಿಸಿದರೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಸಹವಾಸದಿಂದ ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ವಿನಾ ಕಾರಣ ದ್ವೇಷಿಸಲಾರಂಭಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಪರಶುರಾಮನಿಗೆ ಸುಳ್ಳು ಹೇಳಿ ವಿದ್ಯೆ ಕಲಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. **ದೈವಾಯತ್ತಂ ಕುಲೇ ಜನ್ಮ ಮದಾಯತ್ತಮ್ ತು ಪೌರುಷಮ್** ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಅತ್ಮ ಪ್ರಶಂಸೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅವಮಾನಿಸಲು ಪ್ರೇರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯುದ್ಧ ಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೋಸದಿಂದ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಿನ ಹತ್ಯೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣನಾಗಿ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಹೀನಾಯವಾಗಿ ಅಂತ್ಯ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಯು ಪುತ್ರ ಮೋಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಳುಗಿ ಅವನ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸದೆ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಕೋಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಲ್ಲಕ್ಕೂ ಕರ್ತೃವಾದ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನೇ ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಪರಶುರಾಮನು ತನ್ನ ತಂದೆಯನ್ನು ಕೊಂದ ಕಾರ್ತವೀರ್ಯಾರ್ಜುನ ಹಾಗೂ ಅವನ ಮಕ್ಕಳನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಶಿಕ್ಷಿಸದೆ ಇಡೀ ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯ ಕುಲವನ್ನೇ ನಾಶ ಮಾಡಿ ಮಹಾಪರಾಧವನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಪಾಂಡವರು ನಿರ್ವಿಘ್ನವಾಗಿ ವನವಾಸ ಮುಗಿಸಿರಲು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಮಾತಿನಂತೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಮೂಲಕ ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕೇಳಲು ಸೂಜಿ ಮೊನೆಯಷ್ಟು ಭೂಮಿಯನ್ನು ಕೊಡುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಆಡಿದ ಮಾತಿಗೆ ತಪ್ಪುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅವಿವೇಕದಿಂದ ಪರಮಾತ್ಮನನ್ನೇ ಕಟ್ಟಿ ಹಾಕುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅನ್ಯಾಯದ ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ದೂರ ಪ್ರಯಾಣಿಸಿದ್ದು ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿ ಬರಲಾರದಷ್ಟು ದೂರ ಬಂದಿರುವೆನಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಯುದ್ಧ ಮಾಡೇ ತೀರುವೆನೆಂದು ಛಲದಿಂದ ನುಡಿಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಗೆ ತನಗೇ ಜಯವಾಗಲಿ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ ಬಲವಂತಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ವೈಶಂಪಾಯನ ಸರೋವರದಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆದ್ದು ಬಂದಾಗಲೂ ಸುಳ್ಳು ಪ್ರತಾಪವನ್ನು ಕೊಚ್ಚಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತ ತನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನು ಸಮರ್ಥಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬಯಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅರಿಷಡ್ವರ್ಗಗಳು ಅವನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಸೇರಿ ಆತತಾಯೀ ಎನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವನು. [ಅಗ್ನಿ, ವಿಷ, ಶಸ್ತ್ರ, ಧನ, ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ, ಪತ್ನಿ] ಹೀಗೆ ಅಭಿಲಾಷೆ, ಕೋಪ, ದುರಾಸೆ, ಅವಿವೇಕ, ಕಪಟ ಅಸೂಯೆಯಿಂದ, ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ದೈಹಿಕ – ಮಾನಸಿಕ ದುರ್ಬಲತೆಯಿಂದಲೂ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳ ಸಮೂಹವನ್ನೇ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಹಿರಿಯರನ್ನೂ, ಗುರುಜನರನ್ನೂ, ಋಷಿಗಳನ್ನೂ ಅವಮಾನಿಸಿ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಶಿಶುಪಾಲನು ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನ ರಾಜಸೂಯ ಯಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ಕಳ್ಳ, ಮೋಸಗಾರ, ವಂಚಕ, ಕೊಲೆಗಾರ, ಅಯೋಗ್ಯನೆಂದೆಲ್ಲಾ ಜರಿದು ಅಗ್ರಪೂಜೆಗೆ ಅನರ್ಹನೆಂದು, ಭೀಷ್ಮನು ಮುದುಕನೆಂದೆಲ್ಲಾ ನಿಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನು ದ್ವಾರಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದಾಗ ನಗರಕ್ಕೆ ನುಗ್ಗಿ ಭಸ್ಮ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ, ರೈವತಕ ಪರ್ವತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಹರಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಗ ನಿರಾಯುಧರಾದ ಸೈನಿಕರ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಿದ್ದು ಸೈನಿಕರನ್ನು ಕೊಂದು, ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವರನ್ನು ಬಂಧಿಸಿ ತನ್ನ ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸೆಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ತಂದೆಯ ಅಶ್ವಮೇಧಯಾಗದ ಅಶ್ವವನ್ನು ಮುಚ್ಚಿಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕಾಮಚೋದಿತನಾಗಿ ಅಕ್ರೂರನ ಪತ್ನಿಯನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಅನೇಕ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದಾಗ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣನು ಶಿಶುಪಾಲನ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಸಿ ಸೋದರತ್ತೆ ಶ್ರುತಸ್ರವಸಳಿಗೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಮಾತಿನಂತೆ ಅವನ ನೂರು ತಪ್ಪುಗಳನ್ನು ಕ್ಷಮಿಸಿ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಚಕ್ರದಿಂದ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಅಂತ್ಯವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಸಗರನು ಅಶ್ವಮೇಧ ಯಜ್ಞವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲು ದೀಕ್ಷೆ ಪಡೆದು ಅಶ್ವವನ್ನು ಪರ್ಯಟನೆಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟಾಗ ಸಮುದ್ರ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದಕ್ಕಿದ್ದಂತೆ ಅದೃಶ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅವನ ಅರವತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಭೂಮಿಯನ್ನು ಅಗೆದು ಪಾತಾಳ ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಲು ಕಪಿಲ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯ ಸಮೀಪ ಆಶ್ವವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯೇ ಕಳ್ಳನೆಂದು ತೀರ್ಮಾನಿಸಿ ನಿಂದಿಸಿ ತಪಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಭಂಗವನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡಿ ಮಹಾಪರಾಧವನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಕೃದ್ಧರಾದ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಗಳು ಅವರನ್ನು ನೋಡಲು ಕೂಡಲೇ ಭಸ್ಮೀಭೂತರಾಗಿ ತಮ್ಮ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ವಿಂಧ್ಯ ಪರ್ವತವು ಸೂರ್ಯನು ಕೇವಲ ಮೇರು ಪರ್ವತಕ್ಕೆ ನಮಸ್ಕರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಅಸೂಯೆಯಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿ ಸೂರ್ಯಚಂದ್ರರ ಗತಿಯನ್ನೇ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುವಂತೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನ ಏಳ್ಗೆಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಅವರ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ತನ್ನದಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ದುರಾಸೆಯಿಂದ ಕೂಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸಹಸ್ರಪಾದನೆಂಬ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯು ಹಿಂದೆ ತನ್ನ ಮಿತ್ರನಿಗೆ ಉಪಹಾಸ ಮಾಡುವ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಸಮೀಪದಲ್ಲೇ ಇದ್ದ ದರ್ಭೆಯನ್ನು ಹಾವಿನಾಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುತ್ತಿ ಮಿತ್ರ ಖಗಮನ ಮೇಲೆ ಎಸೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಗ್ನಿಹೋತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರತನಾದ ಖಗಮನು ಹಾವೆಂದೇ ಭಾವಿಸಿ ಮೂರ್ಛೆಗೊಂಡು ಕೆಲ ಕಾಲದ ಅನಂತರ ಅದು ತನ್ನ ಮಿತ್ರನಿಂದ ಪರಿಹಾಸಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಕಾರ್ಯವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದು ಮಿತ್ರನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೋಪಗೊಂಡು ನೀನೂ ಕೂಡಾ ವಿಷರಹಿತ ಸರ್ಪವಾಗೆಂದು ಶಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸಹಸ್ರಪಾದನು ಕ್ಷಮೆಯಾಚಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಮತಿಯ ಮಗನಾದ ರುರುವಿನ ದರ್ಶನದಿಂದ ಶಾಪ ನಿವಾರಣೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಪರಿಹಾಸವೂ ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಅಪರಾಧವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ದುರಾಸೆ, ಪರಿಹಾಸವು ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ಅಪರಾಧವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸಿದರೆ ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ಮೋಹವು ಅಪರಾಧ- ಮಾಡಲು ಪ್ರೇರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಪುಲೋಮನೆಂಬ ರಾಕ್ಷಸನು ಒಮ್ಮೆ ಗರ್ಭಿಣಿಯಾದ ಭೃಗು ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯ ಪತ್ನಿ ಪುಲೋಮೆಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಕಾಮಾಭಿಭೂತನಾಗಿ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಲು ಗರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಶಿಶುವು ಹೇಗೋ ಗರ್ಭದಿಂದ ಹೊರಬಂದು ಕೋಪದ ಕಣ್ಗಳಿಂದ ನೋಡಿ ಆ ರಾಕ್ಷಸನನ್ನು ಭಸ್ಮ ಮಾಡುತ್ತದೆ.

ಶರ್ಯಾತಿ ರಾಜನ ಪುತ್ರಿಯು ಹುತ್ತದಲ್ಲಿ ಏನೋ ಹೊಳೆಯುತ್ತಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಿ ಮುಳ್ಳಿನಿಂದ ಚುಚ್ಚಿ ತಪಸ್ಸು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಚ್ಯವನನ ಕಣ್ಣುಗಳಿಗೆ ಹಾನಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಅದರ ಫಲವಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಸಮಸ್ತ ಜನತೆಯು ಮೂತ್ರಪುರೀಷಗಳ ತೊಂದರೆಯಿಂದ ಬಳಲಲು ನಿಜ ವೃತ್ತಾಂತವನ್ನರಿತು ತಪಸ್ವಿಯ ಕ್ಷಮೆಯಾಚಿಸಿ ತನ್ನ ಮಗಳನ್ನೇ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಮದುವೆ ಮಾಡಿ ರೋಗಮುಕ್ತರಾಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಪುತ್ರಿ ಸುಕನ್ಯೆಯು ತನ್ನ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಾಯಶ್ಚಿತ್ತ ಹೊಂದಿ ಪಾತಿವ್ರತ್ಯದಿಂದಲೇ ಪತಿಗೆ ಕಣ್ಣು ಬರುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಪ್ರಜಾಪತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನ ಪುತ್ರಿಯರಾದ ಕದ್ರು, ವಿನುತೆಯರಿಬ್ಬರೂ ಕಶ್ಯಪರನ್ನು ವಿವಾಹವಾಗಿರಲು ಕದ್ರುವು ಸಾವಿರ ಸರ್ಪಗಳಿಗೆ ಜನ್ಮ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ವಿನುತೆಯು ತನಗಿನ್ನೂ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾಗದ ಕಾರಣ ತನ್ನ ಒಂದು ಮೊಟ್ಟೆಯನ್ನು ತಾನೇ ಒಡೆದು ಆ ಶಿಶುವನ್ನು ಅಂಗಹೀನನನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಪುತ್ರನ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ತನ್ನ ಸವತಿಗೆ ದಾಸಿಯೂ ಆಗುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಸುಂದೋಪಸುಂದರು ಹಿರಣ್ಯಕಶಿಪುವಿನ ವಂಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಿಸಿ ಚತುರ್ಮುಖನ ವರ ಮದದಿಂದ ಮೂರ್ಲೋಕವನ್ನು ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ಪೀಡಿಸುತ್ತಿರಲು ತಿಲೋತ್ತಮೆಯ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮರುಳಾಗಿ ಕಾಮಾಭಿಭೂತರಾಗಿ ಅಂತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಮಗಧ ದೇಶದ ಅಧಿಪತಿಯಾದ ಜರಾಸಂಧನು ವಿನಾ ಕಾರಣ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ದ್ವೇಷಿಸುತ್ತಾನಲ್ಲದೆ ಅನೇಕ ರಾಜರನ್ನು ಸೆರೆಯಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯನ ಸಂಹಾರ ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯನಿಂದಲೇ ಆಗಬೇಕೆಂದು ಭೀಮನ ಮೂಲಕ ನಾಶ ಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಿಷಧ ದೇಶದ ರಾಜನಾದ ನಳ ಚಕ್ರವರ್ತಿಯು ಕಲಿಯಿಂದ ಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕಲಿಯಾದರೂ ಮುಂದೆ ತನ್ನ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಭಯಂಕರ ಹಿಂಸೆಯನ್ನೇ ಅನುಭವಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಂಗದೇಶದ ಒಡೆಯನಾದ ಲೋಮಪಾದನು ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರಿಗೆ ಅಸತ್ಯವಾದಿಯಾಗಲು ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರಿಂದ ತಿರಸ್ಕೃತನಾಗಿ ಬರಗಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ದೇಶವನ್ನು ಒಡ್ಡಿ ಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಣಿಮಾಂಡವ್ಯನು ತಾನು ಬಾಲ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಸಣ್ಣ ತಪ್ಪಿಗೆ ಯಮಧರ್ಮನಿಂದ ಮರಣ ದಂಡನೆ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯಮನೂ ಅಲ್ಪಾಪರಾಧಕ್ಕೆ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆ ನೀಡಿದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಭೂಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಶೂದ್ರಕನ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಿಸುವ ಶಿಕ್ಷೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸ್ತ್ರೀವ್ಯಾಮೋಹದಿಂದ ದಶರಥನು, ರಾವಣರು ಮರಣ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಶಕುಂತಲೆಯು ತಪೋವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳೆದಿದ್ದರೂ ಮೋಹಿತಳಾಗಿ ರಹಸ್ಯವಾಗಿ ದುಷ್ಯಂತನನ್ನು ವಿವಾಹವಾಗಿದ್ದಕ್ಕೆ ಕೇಳಬಾರದ ಮಾತನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ನೃಗರಾಜನು ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ ಗೋವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯದೆ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರಿಗೆ ದಾನ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸಾವಿರ ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಓತಿಕೇತನಾಗಿ ಜೀವನ ಸಾಗಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಿನ ಪುತ್ರ ಪರೀಕ್ಷಿತ ರಾಜನು ಬೇಟೆಯಿಂದ ಆಯಾಸಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾಗ ಶಮೀಕ ಋಷಿಯ ಮೌನಾಚರಣೆಯನ್ನು ಅಹಂಕಾರವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದು ಸತ್ತ ಹಾವನ್ನು ಕುತ್ತಿಗೆಗೆ ಹಾಕಿ ಅ ಋಷಿಯ ಪುತ್ರನಿಂದ ಶಾಪಕ್ಕೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಸರ್ಪದಿಂದಲೇ ಮರಣ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಹೀಗೆ ರಾಗಾಧೀನನಾದ ಪುರುಷನು ಪ್ರಾಪಂಚಿಕ ವಸ್ತುಗಳ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿಗೆ ಆಸೆಪಟ್ಟು ಅಧರ್ಮ ಕಾರ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಳುಗಿ ಅನೇಕ ಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅಧರ್ಮಮಾರ್ಗದಿಂದಲೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಂಪತ್ತಿನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಯಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಧನಾಗಮ ತೃಷ್ಣೆಯು ಮಹಾಘೋರವಾದ ಪಾಪ ಸಂಘಟನೆಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಅಪರಾಧದ ಅನ್ಯವ್ಯವಹಾರಗಳು –

ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲು ಮಾನಸಿಕ ದೈಹಿಕ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ, ದುರ್ಬಲತೆ, ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಗಳಷ್ಟೇ ಕಾರಣವಲ್ಲ ನಿಕ್ಷೇಪಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ನ್ಯಾಸರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟಾಗ, ಸೀಮಾವಿವಾದ, ಭೂಸಂಪತ್ತು, ಅಸ್ವಾಮಿವಿಕ್ರಯ, ವಾಕ್–ದಂಡಪಾರುಷ್ಯ, ಸ್ತೇಯ, ಸ್ತ್ರೀಸಂಗ್ರಹಣ, ಸ್ವಾಮಿಪಾಲವಿವಾದ ವಿಚಾರಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಕೆಲವೊಮ್ಮೆ ವಾದ ವಿವಾದಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಅಪರಾಧಕ್ಕೆ ದಾರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಂತಹ ವ್ಯವಹಾರಗಳನ್ನು ರಾಜನಾದವನು ಬಹಳ ಬುದ್ಧಿವಂತಿಕೆಯಿಂದ ಪರಿಹರಿಸಿ ಪ್ರಜೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಶಾಂತಿ ನೆಮ್ಮದಿಯನ್ನು ತರುವುದು ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಕೌಟಿಲ್ಯನು ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ ರಾಜನಾದವನು ಪ್ರಜೆಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಬಗೆಹರಿಸಬೇಕು. ಶಂಖ, ಲಿಖಿತ, ಯಾಜ್ಞವಲ್ಕ್ಯ, ಶುಕ್ರ, ವಿಷ್ಣು ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ ರಾಜನು ಸ್ವ ಇಚ್ಛೆಯಿಂದ ಮಾಡುವ ನ್ಯಾಯವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ನ್ಯಾಯದ ಆಡಳಿತದಲ್ಲಿ ಧರ್ಮವು ಪ್ರಾದುರ್ಭವಿಸಿ ಅಧರ್ಮವು ನಾಶವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ವ್ಯವಹಾರ – ಎಂದರೆ ಲೇವಾದೇವಿ ಅಥವಾ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರವೆಂದು ಉದ್ಯೋಗಪರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಪಸ್ತಂಭ ಧರ್ಮಸೂತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿದೆ. ಶಾಂತಿ ಪರ್ವ, ಮನು, ವಸಿಷ್ಠ, ಯಾಜ್ಞವಲ್ಕ್ಯ, ನಾರದ, ಶುಕ್ರ ನೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವಾದ ಅಥವಾ ಮೊಕದ್ದಮೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದೆ.

ಭೋಗ [ಒಡೆತನ] – ತಂದೆ ಪಾಂಡುವಿನಿಂದ ಪಾಂಡವರಿಗೆ ಬರಬೇಕಾದ ರಾಜ್ಯಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ದ್ಯೂತವೆಂಬ ಮೋಸಮಾರ್ಗದಿಂದ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ತನ್ನದೆಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಿ ಅಪಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲಿ ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿಸುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭ ಬರುತ್ತದೋ ಎಂದು ಚಿಂತಿಸಿ ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೆ ಕಾಡಿಗಟ್ಟುವ ಕಾರ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರತನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ನಿಜವಾದ ಒಡೆತನವಾಗಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಲಗ್ನಕ ಅಥವಾ ಜಾಮೀನಿನ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾಪವು ಕಂಡುಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ನಿಕ್ಷೇಪ – ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನು ದ್ಯೂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಹ – ಪರದ ವಿವೇಕವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಯುಕ್ತಾಯುಕ್ತದ ವಿವೇಚನೆಯಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಸಹಸ್ರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನಿಟ್ಟು ಆಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದೂ ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯ ನಿಕ್ಷೇಪವೇ.

सन्ति निष्कसहस्रस्य भाण्डिन्यो भरिताः शुभाः ।
[सभा–अ–६१,श्लो–१]
कोशो हिरण्यमक्षय्यं जातरूपमनेकशः ।
ऐतद् राजन् मम धनं तेन दीव्याम्यहं त्वया ॥
[सभा–अ–६१, श्लो–२]
अयं बहुधनो राजन् सगरावर्त सम्भवः ।
मणिर्हारोत्तरः श्रीमान् कनकोत्तमभूषणः ।
[सभ–अ–६१, श्लो–७]

ದ್ಯೂತದ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನು ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿಸದೆ ಮರಣದಂಡನೆಗೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನಂತೆ ನಳನೂ ರಾಜ್ಯಾದಿಕೋಶಗಳನ್ನು ದ್ಯೂತದಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟು ಗೆಲ್ಲುವೆನೆಂಬ ಭರವಸೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಡುತ್ತಾನೆ.

हिरण्यस्य सुवर्णस्य यानयुग्मस्य वाससाम् ।
आविष्टः कलिना द्यूते जीयते स्म नलस्तदा ॥
[वन अ–५९, श्लो–९]

ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ನಿಕ್ಷೇಪದ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ನೋಡಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅಸ್ವಾಮಿವಿಕ್ರಯವು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲಿಯು ಕಾಣಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ವೇತನಸ್ಯಾನಪಕರ್ಮ - ವೇತನದ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕಾಣಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಕಷ್ಟಕರವಾದ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಬೇಕಾದ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವತಃ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳೆ ಅಥವಾ ರಾಜರೇ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಕೆಲಸಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವೇತನವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರೆಂದು ತಿಳಿದುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ಶಾಲ್ವರಾಜನು ದ್ವಾರಕೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ದಂಡೆತ್ತಿ ಬಂದಾಗ ದ್ವಾರಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯುದ್ಧಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿದ್ಧರಾಗಿ ನಿಂತ ಸೈನಿಕರಿಗೆ ಅವರು ಕೇಳದೇ ಇದ್ದರೂ ಅಧಿಕವಾದ ವೇತನವು ನೀಡಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಸುವರ್ಣ ನಾಣ್ಯಗಳನ್ನೇ ಅಧಿಕವಾಗಿ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದರಲ್ಲದೆ ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಉಡುಪು, ಪುಷ್ಟಿಕರವಾದ ಅಹಾರವೂ ಲಭಿಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಸೈನಿಕರೂ ರಾಜನಿಷ್ಠೆಯಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಇಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವೇತನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕಂಡು ಬರುವ ಯಾವ ವ್ಯಾಜ್ಯಗಳು ಅಂದಿನ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

दत्त वेतनभक्तं च दत्तायुधपरिच्छदम् । कृतोपधनं च तदा
बलमासीन्महाभुज ॥ [वन–अ–१५, श्लो–२१]

ಅಭ್ಯುಪೇತ್ಯಾಶುಶ್ರೂಷಾ - ಭೀಷ್ಮರು ತಾನು ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಉಪ್ಪಿನ ಋಣದಲ್ಲಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಅವನ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕಾರ್ಯ ಮಾಡುವೆನೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿ ಕೊಂಡುಕೊಂಡ ಸೇವಕ ತಾನೆಂದು ಪರೋಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ತನ್ನಿಚ್ಛೆ ಬಂದಂತೆ ನಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ತನಕ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದರೆ ಯಾವ ರೀತಿಯ ಸೇವಕನೆಂದು ಊಹಿಸುವುದೂ ಅಸಾಧ್ಯ. ಸ್ವಾಮಿಪಾಲ ವಿವಾದವು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲಿಯು ಸಿಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಕರಾರು ಅಥವಾ ಒಪ್ಪಂದದ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆ - ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ವಿವಾಹ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಧೃಷ್ಟದ್ಯುಮ್ನನು ಕರಾರೊಂದನ್ನು ಹಾಕುತ್ತಾನಾದರೂ ಕರಾರನ್ನು ಮುರಿಯುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭ ಕಾಣಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ವಿವಾಹವಾದಾಗ ನಾರದರ ಮಾತಿನಂತೆ ಅವಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಲು ಒಂದೊಂದು ವರ್ಷ ಒಬ್ಬೊಬ್ಬರು ಅವಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಇರಬೇಕೆಂಬ ನಿಯಮವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಪತಿ - ಪತ್ನಿಯರು ಏಕಾಂತದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗ ಇತರ ಸಹೋದರರಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಹವರು ಹನ್ನೆರಡು ವರ್ಷ ವನವಾಸ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದು ನಿರ್ಧರಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣನ ಗೋಧನ ರಕ್ಷಣೆಯ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನನು ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನು ಏಕಾಂತ ಸ್ಥಳದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ಮಾಡುವನು. ಕರಾರು ಮುರಿದಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಹನ್ನೆರಡು ವರ್ಷ ವನವಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕ್ರಯವಿಕ್ರಯಾನುಶಯ - ಕ್ರಯ - ವಿಕ್ರಯಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಅನೇಕ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಶಿಬಿ ಚಕ್ರವರ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಪರೀಕ್ಷಿಸಲು ಇಂದ್ರಾಗ್ನಿಗಳು ಬಂದಾಗ ಶಿಬಿಯು ಪಾರಿವಾಳದ ಮಾಂಸದ ಸಮಕ್ಕೆ ತನ್ನ ಶರೀರದ ಮಾಂಸವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಋಚೀಕ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯು ಗಾಧಿರಾಜನ ಮಗಳಾದ

ಸತ್ಯವತಿಯನ್ನು ವಿವಾಹವಾಗುವ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾವಿರ ಅಶ್ವಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಮದುವೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಚ್ಯವನ ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯು ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತಪಸ್ಸು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಗ ಬೆಸ್ತರು ಮೀನಿನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಋಷಿಯನ್ನು ಮೇಲಕ್ಕೆತ್ತಲು ಭೀತರಾದ ಬೆಸ್ತರು ರಾಜನ ಬಳಿ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ನಿವೇದಿಸಲು ರಾಜನು ಕ್ಷಮೆ ಯಾಚಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯು ಮೀನಿನೊಂದಿಗೆ ತನ್ನನ್ನೂ ಸರಿಯಾದ ಬೆಲೆಗೆ ಕ್ರಯಕ್ಕೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕೆಂದು ಹೇಳಲು ರಾಜನು ಗೋವನ್ನು ನೀಡಿ ಕ್ರಯಕ್ಕೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದೇನೆ ಎನಲು ಮಹರ್ಷಿಯು ಸಂತುಷ್ಟನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕರ್ಣನು ಕವಚ ಕುಂಡಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಾಗಿ ಇಂದ್ರನಿಂದ ಶಕ್ತ್ಯಾಯುಧವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಸೀಮಾವಿವಾದ ಘೋಷಾಯಾತ್ರಪರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನು ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಅಪಹಾಸ್ಯ ಮಾಡಲು ದ್ವೈತವನಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದು ದ್ವೈತಸರೋವರವನ್ನು ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಲು ಗಂಧರ್ವರಿಂದ ತಡೆಹಿಡಿಯಲ್ಪಟ್ಟರೂ ಬಲವಂತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುವುದು ಸೀಮೋಲ್ಲಂಘನೆಯೆ.

ವಾಕ್ಪಾರುಷ್ಯ - ದಂಡಪಾರುಷ್ಯ - ಉತ್ತಂಕನನ್ನು ಶಪಿಸುವ ಪೌಷ್ಯರಾಜನು ಅವನ ವಿಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು, ಶಿಶುಪಾಲನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ವಿಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ವಾಕ್ ಪಾರುಷ್ಯವೇ. ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಸಭೆಗೆ ಎಳೆದು ತರುವಾಗ 'ದಾಸಿ ದಾಸಿ' ಎಂದದ್ದು, ಕರ್ಣನು ದಾಸಪತ್ನೀ ಎನ್ನುವುದು, ಪಾಂಡವರನ್ನು ಗೌ ಗೌ ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯುವುದು ವಾಕ್ ಪೌರುಷ್ಯವೇ ಆಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅರ್ಜುನನು ಕರ್ಣನನ್ನು ಕೊಲ್ಲದೆ ಶಿಬಿರಕ್ಕೆ ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿದಾಗ ಕೋಪಗೊಂಡ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನು ಬಾಯಿಗೆ ಬಂದಂತೆ ನಿಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಮಾಂಡವ್ಯನ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜಭಟರು ನಡೆದುಕೊಂಡದ್ದು, ದುಃಶಾಸನನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯನ್ನು ಕೇಶ ಹಿಡಿದು ಸಭೆಗೆ ಕರೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದದ್ದು, ಕೀಚಕನ ನಡೆ, ಜಯದ್ರಥನು ಅವಳನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದು ಹೀಗೆ ಅನೇಕ ದಂಡಪಾರುಷ್ಯವು ಕಾಣಸಿಗುತ್ತದೆ.

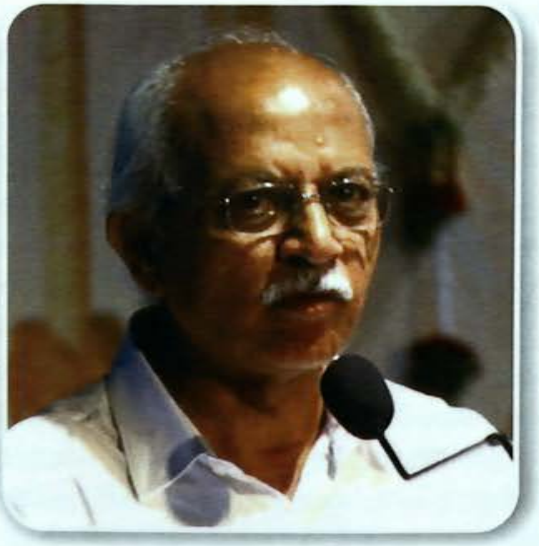
ಸ್ತೇಯ - ಉತ್ತುಂಕನು ಪುಷ್ಯರಾಜನ ಪತ್ನಿಯ ಕರ್ಣಕುಂಡಲಗಳನ್ನು ತರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾಗ ತಕ್ಷಕನು ಅದನ್ನು ಅಪಹರಿಸಿ ನಾಗಲೋಕಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಜನಮೇಜಯನ ಸರ್ಪಯಜ್ಞದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ದುಃಖವನ್ನು ಅನುಭವಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ವಸುದೇವನ ಅಶ್ವಮೇಧ ಯಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿಶುಪಾಲನು ಯಜ್ಞಾಶ್ವವನ್ನೇ ಅಪಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಸುರಾಪಾನ - ಶುಕ್ರಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಚನ ಬದುಕಲ್ಲಿಸುರಾಪಾನವು ಮಹತ್ತರವಾದ ತಿರುವನ್ನೇ ಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಯುದ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾತ್ಯಕಿಯು ಮದ್ಯಪಾನ ಮಾಡಿ ಕೃತವರ್ಮನ ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ಕತ್ತರಿಸಿಹಾಕುತ್ತಾನೆ. ತ್ರಿಶಿರಸನು ತನ್ನ ಮೂರನೇ ಮುಖದಿಂದ ಸುರಾಪಾನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದನು.

ಸಾಹಸ - ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾಮನು ಮಲಗಿದ್ದ ಪಾಂಚಾಲರನ್ನು ಸೋಮಕರನ್ನು ಮಧ್ಯರಾತ್ರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಮೂಹಿಕವಾಗಿ ಹತ್ಯೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಶಿರಾಸ್ತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಉತ್ತರೆಯ ಗರ್ಭವನ್ನು ಗುರಿಮಾಡಿ ಭ್ರೂಣಹತ್ಯೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಯವಕ್ರೀತನು ಪರಾವಸುವಿನ ಪತ್ನಿಯನ್ನು ಬಲಾತ್ಕರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸಿ ಮರಣವನ್ನೇ ಹೊಂದುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಸ್ತ್ರೀ, ದ್ಯೂತ, ಬೇಟೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಮದ್ಯಪಾನ ಈ ನಾಲ್ಕನ್ನು ಕಾಮಜನಿತವಾದ ದುಃಖ ಚತುಷ್ಟಯಗಳೆಂದು ಹೇಳಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನಾಗಲಿ, ನಳನಾಗಲಿ ಹೊರತಾಗಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರತಿ ಪಾತ್ರವೂ ಒಂದಲ್ಲ ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರಾಧವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದವರೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಬ್ಬರೂ ಬುದ್ಧಿಯನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಹತೋಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು ಸತ್ಕರ್ಮದಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಯಬೇಕು. ಮಾಡುವ ಶುಭಾಶುಭ ಕರ್ಮಗಳೇ ಅವನ ಸುಖ ದುಃಖಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದಲೇ ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಸಮಭಾವ, ಸಂಯಮ, ವಿನಯ, ಅನುಕಂಪ, ಔದಾರ್ಯ, ಸತ್ ಅಂತಃಕರಣದಿಂದ ಬಾಳಿ ಪಾಪವೆಂಬ ಕತ್ತಲೆಯನ್ನು ಕಳೆದು ಬೆಳಕಿನ ದಿವ್ಯಧಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿರಾಜರಾಗಬೇಕೆಂಬುದೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶ. ❑

management lessons from Mahabharata



—Dr. T.V. Raju

There are many management lessons that are discussed in Mahabharata which are even today in vogue. The scholars all over the world have taken the hints from this epic and adopted to the contemporary businesses. This article examine the various lessons on management that are camouflaged in the ancient Indian epic of Mahabharata.

Abstract

The Indian philosophy on management has sprung from the grass roots. It appears more experiential rather than prescriptive. The concept Business Management has gained more importance from past 50 years in India but, the knowledge of management existed even before the British rule in India. They have been existing in the form of mythological stories and folk tales, which has been passed on from generation to generation. However, we have been ignorant towards this hidden knowledge and have not considered it seriously to apply in business situations. One such Epic poem from where we can learn many management skills that suit even in today's business situation is MAHABHARATA.

Mahabharata is one of the oldest and greatest epics of Hindu mythology that the world has ever witnessed. It is the longest epic poem ever written and had been composed in the 4th century BCE or earlier, which is astonishing and speaks volumes of this epic.

Mahabharata is a tale of dispute among the Kaurava and Pandava princes for conquering the throne of Hastinapura. The epic holds great moral and ethical value that can inspire and teaches the youth of our generation to move in the righteous direction to achieve their goals. It closely observes the behaviour of human beings revolving around love, protection, ambition and competitiveness and makes it relevant to current business scenario.

There are many management lessons that are discussed in Mahabharata which are even today in vogue. The scholars all over the world have taken the hints from this epic and adopted to the contemporary businesses. This article examine the various lessons on management that are camouflaged in the ancient Indian epic of Mahabharata.

Key words : Management, Leadership, Strategy, Communication

Introduction

The word Management plays a very important role in one's life be it at home, office, factory, Government, business organization etc. Management principles are used to manage time, resources, personnel, materials, machinery, finance, planning, priorities, policies and practice. Management is a systematic way of doing all activities in any field of human effort. It strikes harmony in working with equilibrium in thoughts and actions, goals and achievements, plans and performance, products and markets.

The term 'management' has been used in different senses. Sometimes it refers to the process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling, at other times it is used to describe it as a function of managing people. It is also referred to as a body of knowledge, a practice and discipline. Some of them describe management as a technique of leadership and decision-making while some others have analysed management as an economic resource, a factor of production or a system of authority.

The Indian Civilisation is the oldest civilization in the world. India has given wisdom, knowledge and learning to the world. India was the fore-runner in the thought process of various fields like Economics, Philosophy, Spirituality, Astronomy, Literature, Arts, Mathematics and Management.

Management is not new to this land of India, which has a long history of culture, tradition and ethos. Ancient India led in overseas trade and commerce. Considering that it has now become imperative in the current scenario to identify innovative and creative tools and techniques to beat the competition, it is worthwhile to explore deep into the Indian mythology searching for a fresh framework in management.

Indian Philosophy on Management clearly brings out the fact that human beings are different and motivated by different factors, so there cannot be one dimensional approach to all the problems. It is also accepted that one event or person or action cannot be viewed in isolation, but each leader must cultivate a holistic approach and look at the larger good of mankind to achieve the goal of better and improved life quality for all.

Mahabharata is one of the greatest written Hindu epic of all times and the second longest epic of the world. The story spreads over 100000 shlokas, or over 200000 verses, as each shloka is a couplet, consisting about 1.8 million words, the Mahabharata is almost 4 times longer than the Ramayana. The Mahabharata, meaning the great battle, narrates the epic of Kurukshetra war and the fates of Pandava and Kaurava princes. It is centered around the central theme of Dharma and contains devotional and philosophical content. The Mahabharata has been written in eighteen books, called parvas.

Mahabharata is not just an epic narrative of the Kurukshetra War or a book of philosophy; rather it is a comprehensive manual on management strategy. Mahabharata encompasses many lessons on management which can potentially be applied to modern business practices. Vyasa's epic poem is considered to be an appropriate guide on management and these management insights are being practiced by many today.

1. **Stick to the goals**

   Lord Krishna had three definite goals and throughout his life he stick to them.

   Paritranaya sadhunam - welfare for good

   vinashaya dushkritam - destroy evil (thoughts)

   dharma sansthapana - establish and strengthen the principles

   As a business manager one should have clear goals in the organisation and never allow his/her senses to control him/her.

2. **Decision Making**

   Bhishma is a venerable but curious combine of a sage-cum-warrior. He was born to King Santanu and goddess Ganga. Once King Santanu saw an exceedingly beautiful lady fell in love with her and wanted to marry her. The lady's father imposed a condition that the king has to promise to crown the son born to her. Since King Santanu had a son, Devavrata, by his wife goddess Ganga, he did not accept the condition for matrimony and returned to the palace. Devavrata who found his father sad, learnt from a minister what was in his mind. He told his father he was willing to surrender his royal rights to his would be half-brothers. He held a promise to the fisherwoman and her father that he would remain a celibate so that his progeny would not stake claim to the throne later. Thus were born of Santanu and the fisherwoman Satyavati the two sons Vichitraveerya and Chirtrangada. Both the sons of the fisherwoman Satyavati had an untimely death and there was no one to rule the kingdom, Satyavati asked Bhishma to take up the throne, because of his vow to his father Bhishma did not accept the request of Satyavati. Bhishma was a firm decision maker whatever was the situation he did not yield to the circumstances.

3. Competition

Business in the current world is more than a battlefield. Gone are the days when business was defined by the profit and loss it made. Today, business is an amalgamation of tactics, finance, strategies and having a competitive advantage. There is an intense competition within as well as between organizations.

Mahabharata is a zero-sum battle which ends with the destruction of all. Kauravas and Pandavas can be considered as two strong competitors in a market. It is well known that Pandavas won the battle over Kauravas through their strategies and sheer determination. The winners of the battle suffered equally as the losers and what they got was a deserted land and a withered country. The important lesson is that the competitors must try to find areas of collaboration wherever possible, pool their resources, offer innovative solutions for customer's money. Companies must also look into the social as well as environmental implications of their activities.

4. Quality vs Quantity

When the Kauravas and Pandavas decided to go for a war, Dhuryodhana and Arjuna will meet Lord Krishna to assist them in the war. Lord Krishna asks them to choose between Him and the Akshouhini Sainya. Dhuryodhana chose the Akshouhini Sainya and Arjuna chose the Lord himself.

The battle for quality and quantity is one of the management top debatable question. Even today experts have a dual toned views to deal with these two factors. As Bruce Lee says, "I'm not afraid of a person who has practiced 1000 kicks one time rather afraid of a person who has practiced one kick 1000 times." This portrays the importance of quality and quantity.

5. Leadership

"Leaders become great not because of their power but, because of their ability to empower others" - John Maxwell.

The leader in the whole story of Mahabharata is undoubtedly Lord Krishna who guided Pandavas all through their tough times and kept their spirits high by reminding them of their duty and their objective of life. Though Lord Krishna was the leader, it can be seen that he never played any role in the battle. Instead, he acted as a beacon to the Pandavas and stood to the John Maxwell's definition of a leader.

Lord Krishna empowered five brothers of Pandavas with proper guidance and support. He motivated them to develop all the skills required to fight for themselves and the betterment of the world (for dharma). Without Lord Krishna, the Pandavas would have failed.

Like Pandavas, every organisation needs a leader with dexterity comparable to Lord Krishna of Mahabharata. Making the organisation achieve its mission is in the hands of a leader. Organising, strategizing, and managing people efficiently is what is called for from a leader. In the modern days, the credit of the success of companies like ITC, Wipro, Apple, Infosys and Tata goes to their respective leaders. They are the ones who made the company tread the path of success in difficult times.

In modern era, Stephen Covey also mentions in his book that "as a professional, you must pay heed to your 'inner voice'". While proposing the whole person paradigm, he focuses on the four dimensions of a person - spirit, body, heart and mind. The one who listens to the voice of his/her conscience often excels in strategizing and pioneering leadership skills.

6. Difficult situations need strategic action, not a reaction

Lord Krishna had another caveat, that no matter whose team he is on, he will not personally pick up a weapon in the war. When someone is oppressed, their thinking capacities diminish and they are not able to think or 'act' strategically as much as they 'react' to the situation. Such was the case with the Pandavas. More than power, they needed a strong strategy to deal with the situation. Lord Krishna rightly analysed the needs, because he knew that the Pandavas were skilled warriors, and they do not need his combat skills as much as they need his guidance with strategy. Hence, throughout the war, he offered just strategic advice to Arjuna and his team.

Sometimes organizations or individuals cannot withstand crisis or they mishandle a difficult situation, because they react immediately and did not have a good strategy to deal with it.

7. Commitment and Competence

Karna knew that his own brothers are his foes. He gave his intimate friend Dhuryodhana a word of assurance that he will stand by him irrespective of the situation. He knew that he will be defeated by the great Lord Krishna who was in the opposition camp. But then, he fought just for the promise he had given to his friend. Such was the commitment of Karna towards his friend Dhuryodhana. Even though he knew that he was fighting in the side of "Adharma", just for the word and promise which he gave he fought with valour and commitment.

Kauravas had highly competent people with them for example, Bhishma who gave away his secret to die and did not attempt to kill the Pandavas, Drona who indirectly gave away his secret, Karna only humiliated but did not kill Yudhisthira and Bhima.

On the other hand the Pandava army showed extraordinary commitment where Abhimanyu, a 16 year old gentleman underwent a suicide mission in the chakravyuha. It took the combined effort of 7 competent warriors to overcome this committed soldier, Ghatotkacha deliberately fell on the army ranks causing damage even in death, Yudhisthira went to face Karna knowing full that he would be defeated.

It was the difference in the commitment of the people on both sides that made the difference.

When selecting a team it is always better to have people who are passionate and committed rather than people who excel individually. The best man for the job is not the one with the best skills but with the greatest commitment.

8. Passion to learn

The story of Ekalavya and the royal guru Dronacharya is a milestone to achieve for Management aspirants. Ekalavya was passionate about learning the art of archery, but his potential guru 'Dronacharya' refused to teach him the skills. Therefore, he hid behind trees and watched him teach the art of archery to Pandavas and Kauravas. It is his passion that he learnt all the techniques of archery just by observing from far away without a teacher actually teaching him.

He becomes so good at it that Drona feels, he is actually better than (on par with) Arjuna.

Hence, if any one want to excel in a career of their choice then ignore the impediments and work industriously to achieve the goals. In the field of management, Passion to succeed counts both academically and practically as well. The commitment to fulfil the deadlines, the agility to learn new skills and flexibility in adjusting to the ever changing dynamic conditions of the business are required to sail through the waves of challenges. Therefore, remain passion-driven to succeed or else you will perish.

9. Captivating Opportunity

During exile the Pandavas did not lose their heart. Instead, they saw it as an opportunity and focused on further developing their competence in their area of interest. Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva worked hard in spite of challenging conditions and hardships. Yudhishthira worked on building his expertise in the dice game from several rishis (wise men) and became undefeatable. Bhima worshipped Lord Hanuman and became an expert in mace fighting. Similarly Arjuna developed several skillsets apart from archery. He learnt dance from Chitrasena, at the abode of his father Indra; Nakula and Sahadeva too developed their mastery over medicine and astrology respectively. Thus a stronger team was created by perseverance and determination.

If we consider the exile period of Pandavas as recession for the business world, then we can see that those companies which stood strong and continued to deliver the same efficiency and improved on their drawbacks, grew stronger once the dark clouds of recession had passed. Intel, Amazon and Dominos are the companies worth mentioning.

10. Motivation

The war of Kurukshetra was fought over 18 days. During the war in those days, as per the laws agreed upon, the battle was fought from sunrise to sunset. After that, each army retired, to resume again the next day. At night the wounded were treated, the horses and elephants were cared, strategies were planned, and soldiers were motivated.

Yudhishtira went from one camp to another, followed by servants who carried pots filled with herbs and medications. He went to each soldier, and enquired about them, cared for their wounds, personally bandaged some of them, gave them succour and thanked them.

The next day, even the most grievously hurt would turn up for the battle. They believed they owed their life to their leader, who did not treat them like hired help and actually came and tended to them personally. This was motivation of the highest order. They were willing to give up their life willingly to their leader.

Another example is, when Arjuna breaks down in the battlefield saying that he cannot fight against his own relatives, as an emotionally intelligent leader, Lord Krishna was quick to analyse the real cause of Arjuna's anxiety - that he was shying away because he was nervous about the outcome of the war (like the exam tension or the interview tension). He shakes Arjuna out of his distracting mind and motivates him through his teachings. (Bhagavad Gita)

People do not necessarily mean what they say at all times. Many times in business when there is a challenging project, people may feel they do not know how to do it, or fear they will do it badly. It is necessary to analyse the real cause. A good leader can boost employee morale to get cracking on any challenging task or project.

An important aspect of Motivation is that it can rarely be delegated. Motivation has to come from the senior most in the organization. If they appear enthused, the organization will carry that. If they lack interest or do not communicate the same, it is unlikely that the people down the line will work towards achieving goals and objectives.

11. Act with Faith and Conviction

Since Arjuna was to fight with his forefather Bhishma, teachers Dorna and Kripa, who were exemplary warriors, he did not have faith in himself to stand up to them in the war, this was the time when Lord Krishna makes Arjuna understand the importance of faith in the work. He said, "Whatever is done without faith - whether it is sacrifice, charity, austerity, or any other act is useless. It has no value here or hereafter, O Arjuna."

Before you undertake any action, think about how strongly you believe in it. This is yet another lesson for an entrepreneur to be a good leader. Before changing your idea into action, preserve a core belief in yourself for it, and then act with conviction.

12. Share responsibility

The Kauravas had a centralised leadership with one head of the army at a time who had the control of the entire 11 divisions (Akshauhinis). Bhisma, Drona, Karna, Shalya and Aswathamma pass the command. As they fall and for a brief period the army is leaderless. Despite the commanders, Duryodhana is the chief controller. This dichotomy in leadership often results in clashes.

The Pandavas on the other hand have a modern management structure to their army. Arjuna was the chief commander of the army, with Lord Krishna as his counsellor. Dhristadymna was the commander-in-chief and also commander of one of the seven divisions (Akshauhinis).

The sharing of responsibility, thus power leads to a democracy in the management and reduced reliance on one individual, thus reducing risk.

Efficiently sharing responsibilities is the mark of a good manager and the great Indian epic gives the best example for this. Pandavas fought the war as one team with one goal in mind while Kauravas lacked the team spirit and they all fought individual wars. It is advised to the managers not to make the decision-making process a dictatorial one, rather involve everyone so that the best of ideas will pop up.

13. Necessity of diversification

'Do not put all your eggs in the same basket' is repeatedly told in management classes. This is what is exactly done by all the brothers of Pandava family. Product diversification of the companies too is of great significance. If one product fails or is strongly hit by changes in its respective market, then other shall take care of the company's survival. In case the company survives on single product, then the risk involved is extremely high.

14. Managing Emotions

There was a time when Arjuna was totally under a dilemma. He became bewildered upon seeing people he loved and respected are ready to battle against him. At a point of time he mentally gave up the war seeing his friends, cousins, relatives and teachers as he was not ready to fight with them or kill any of them.

Lord Krishna removed the Maaya that engulfed Arjuna and made him sad and nervous. Lord Krishna preached Karma Yoga, Gnaana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga and finally showed his Viswaroopam, to make Arjuna understand who Lord Krishna is. That way he removed the illusion or Maaya that was covering Arjuna. Arjuna realised what is what and, after that, he fought the war with full vigour and with complete devotion to Lord Krishna and finally won the war.

Similarly emotions like grief, sadness, envy, fear may sometimes make individuals indecisive due to lots of ups and down in his/her personal as well as financial life resulting into inaction into the business when it is required the most. A good Advisor can help managers in taking the action at the time when it is needed the most even if he is emotionally not ready to take the action. He can do so by sharing his wisdom and experience and making him visualize the bigger picture rather than getting affected by short term hiccups.

15. Taking calculated risks with dynamic strategies

Any venture in the real world comes with associated risk with it and all the decisions require us to take decisions after evaluation of these risks. Pandavas and Kauravas both took risks but while Duryodhana's decisions were whimsical and egoist, the Pandavas took calculated risks which mostly paid off. But again the various decision making of the two armies teach us one thing : there are no perfect plans.

Lord Krishna has acted as a greatest crisis manager showing how to take calculated risks at the time of crisis. Management is all about taking calculated risks. Shying away from challenges is not a sign of management, rather well-assessed decisions to face the challenges is the trademark of good management.

Pandavas spent one year in exile with the poor people and the years of exile helped them to reach out to people from various strata of the society while Kauravas had no experience of the ground reality as they lived a royal life. Managers need to understand the realities to lead their team in the right direction. They need to break the barriers to get in touch with their subordinates to understand their problems and identify ways to make their work easier.

16. Neglect none

Nakula and Sahadeva were the step brothers of Yudhishthira, Bhima and Arjuna. They were never ill-treated or neglected. They were loved and cared by their step brothers as one among them. Nakula was known for his knowledge in medicine and Sahadeva was known for his expertise in astrology. Even though Nakula and Sahadeva played a minute role in the battle field, they did lot of work behind the screen. They treated all injured soldiers and healed their wounds. The Pandavas even though had less man power than Kauravas, they were able to sustain themselves because of the backbreaking work done by Nakula and Sahadeva.

If we consider the five Pandava brothers of Mahabharata as different departments of an organisation, then we can see that the companies need to give equal importance to all their departments. It may be Finance, HR, Marketing or Research and Development etc. None of them is to be taken lightly and due importance is to be given to each department as they have their own role to play in building a healthy organization and growing in the market.

17. Team Work

Kauravas had 11 divisons against 7 divisions of Pandavas. The great generals of Kauravas fought their individual battles. Bhishma fought because of the vow he took to protect the throne of Hastinapura, Drona and Kripa fought because of their allegiance to the throne, Karna fought because of his friendship with Duryodhana and to prove his mettle against Arjuna, Shalya a Pandava ally demoralised the Kauravas. They were a group of brilliant individuals which made a terrible team. Often described as bees, hornets and mosquitos put in a jar with clash of egos (Bhishma-Karna, Bhishma-Shakuni, Karna-Shalya).

Pandavas are highly appreciated for their team work. The common goal of establishing the rule of law in the Indian sub-continent was the one that kept them working diligently. Everyone on the side of Pandavas was highly committed to their goal. They were selfless and bound to their ultimate aim of dharma. Even in the times of difficulty they motivated and stood by each other. Again all of them were a part of decision making process and contributed their skills leading to a synergic effect.

In contemporary era, management students are taught management lessons on 'Synergy' and 'Esprit de corps'. This principle is one of Henri Fayol's 14 administrative principles that emphasizes on maintaining the group cohesion in the organization.

Thus, all the organisation need to build a good team spirit among its employees and care for their employees. The success of HCL technologies by adopting the policy of Employees first and Customers second stands as proof for the significance of valuing the employees. A well-defined vision and mission with which employees connect is also equally important for the success of the organisation. The great story teaches the golden lesson that only a combined effort can bring in success.

18. Partial Knowledge may be dangerous

When it came to Abhimanyu, son of great warrior Arjuna was known for his valour, pride and bravery. But one mistake he ever committed was that his incomplete knowledge led to demise of his own self. He knew how to break into the Chakravyuha, a formation used in wars in ancient India usually considered deadly, knew how to sustain it, fight against it but unfortunately he never knew to exit such a formation. In today's world this is case of incomplete knowledge. The problem is that many think that they can specialize themselves in various fields but unfortunately most of us miserably fail in such an audacious process. It is to be noted that an entry plan alone is not sufficient for an entrepreneur, it is also equally important that he should have a right exit plan as well.

19. Using the right model at the right time

During Kurukshetra war, Lord Krishna let Ghatotkacha to die so that Karna would not be able to use his Shakti astra to kill Arjuna. Lord Krishna let Abhimanyu to die in violation of all laws decided for the war so that even the Pandavas could break the laws to kill Duryodhana, Karna and Drona. Ethically these moves were wrong, but they were necessary to win the terminal goal of the battle.

In strategic management also organizations are aware about various models, but depending upon the nature of the economic downturn and boom, the model is chosen and implemented to churn out the market share.

20. Never give in to Stress

In today's hectic schedule with people snapping at each other because of mounting stress and intolerance, Lord Krishna says to Arjuna "The one by whom others are not agitated and who is not agitated by others, who is free from joy, envy, fear, and anxiety, is also dear to Me" when he was very stressful and agitated to gauge a war against his own relatives.

This is another lesson for business leaders. A calm human mind can do wonders. Worrying excessively for anything is injurious. Sometimes people keep adding a lot of work in their kitty than what they can do. A peace of mind can improve the quality of your work. Therefore, one should get rid of over-thinking to manage things in life in a better and effective way.

21. Communication

Drona was very powerful and inconquerable having the irresistible Brahma astra, Lord Krishna hinted to Yudhishthira that Drona would give up his arms if his son Ashwathama was dead. Bhima proceeded to kill an elephant named Ashwathama and loudly proclaimed that Ashwathama was dead. Drona approached Yudhishthira to seek the truth of his son's death. Yudhishthira proclaimed Ashwathama Hatahath, Naro Va Kunjaro Va, implying Ashwathama had died but he was not sure whether it was a Drona's son or an elephant, the latter part of his proclamation (Naro va Kunjaro va) were drowned out by sound of the conch blown by Krishna intentionally (a different version of the story is that Yudhishthira pronounced the last words so feebly that Drona could not hear the word elephant). In business, it is important to communicate to the right person at the right time to achieve the goal and move forward towards the path of success.

22. Excellence in Governance

When Indrapastha was built, Pandavas ruled in a fair and just manner. They did not drift from the path of righteousness. Their administration and management won the love and affection of their people. They ruled for thirty-six years on this path before falling prey to an unfair game of dice. It was this excellence in governance that eventually got lost and led to a heinous battle in Kurukshetra.

At present, Excellence in Governance is a vital condition for a business leader to command respect in the marketplace and among their employees. It is vital for maintaining a healthy culture in the organizations and vent off the malice of office politics and other emanating aspects that breeds negativity. The HR department can ensure that certain initiatives taken by organization to ensure a culture of excellence in governance are in place. The Infosys, Tata Group, Google India, Intel, Wipro are some of the organizations that offer best environment and place to work for their employees.

Conclusion

Winning does not give us everything, this is what Pandavas learnt when they eventually defeated the cousin brothers, Kauravas. They found no reason in enjoying the hard fought price of ruling the kingdom ultimately leaving everything to their descendants and disappearing to the forests to know the real essence of their birth. They deeply regretted the triumph of the Kurukshtra war, which cost the life of various relatives and friends. This teaches us the important learning that obsession of winning alone will not give us everything in our life rather the real truth of knowing the reason of your birth and having spiritual quotient inside all are the ones which should be kept at the apex of all priorities.

Management is and will remain an imperfect science. As long as humans are managers, and managing human events and activities, there will be an element of un-predictability, of uncertainty. Just as we today look at the characters, either accept their views or learn from their mistakes, similarly, somewhere our current world will be chronicled. Maybe hundreds of years later someone will look at our actions and critique them. Therefore, our responses now, would reflect our present, but also be a beacon for the future generations.

Mahabharata is a story of challenges which makes it comparable to business situations. Every chapter of Mahabharata has a lesson to offer which could help business executives to plan their strategy and make a meaningful impact. Hence being Indians let us start looking at Mahabharata and other mythological stories with business perspective and make maximum out of them.

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हिन्दी–साहित्य मे महाभारत

—**Prof. Prabhunath Dwivedi**

महाभारत एक विशाल आकर ग्रन्थ है। जिसमे एक से बढ़कर एक आख्यान, नीति, धर्मओर संस्कृति के तत्व अमूल्य कोष के रूप में संरक्षित है। इस आर्ष महाकाव्य की सरलता, रमणीयता, सरसता और विद्वत्ता ने परवर्ती साहित्यकरों को इतना प्रभावित किया कि वे उसे अपना प्रमुख उपजीव्य ग्रन्थ मानने लगे। अपनि रुचि और आवश्यकता के अनुसार किसी रचनाकार कवि ने आख्यान ग्रहण किया, किसी ने पात्र विशेष का चरित्र चित्रण अपनाया, किसी का मन धार्मिक तत्वों में रमा तो उसने अपनी रचना में उसे समाविष्ट किया और किसीने महाभारत की सांस्कृतिक दृष्टि को अपनी कृति की झोली में डाल लिया। महाभारतकार ने स्वयं उसी उपजीव्यता का अनेकशः सङ्केत किया है।

नमः सर्वविदे तस्मै व्यासाय कविवेधसे ।
चक्रे पुण्यं सरस्वत्या यो वर्षमिदं भारतम्॥
(बाणभट्टः हर्षचरित, १.४)

लौकिक संस्क्रुत साहित्य के आदिकाल मे दो आर्ष महाकाव्यों का प्रणयन हुआ। वे हैं महर्षि वाल्मीकि कृत रामायण जिसे आदिकाव्य भी कहा जाता है तथा महर्षि कृष्ण द्वैपायन, महर्षि बादरयण,महर्षि वेदव्यास कृत 'भारत' या 'महाभारत'। आख्यानों से रहित चौबीस हजार श्लोकों से युक्त ग्रन्थ की संज्ञा है भारत–

चतुर्विंशतिसाहस्रीं चक्रे भारतसंहिताम्।
उपाख्यानैर्विना तावद् भारतं प्रोच्यते बुधैः।

किन्तु आख्यानों, उपाख्यानों से युक्त होकर यह 'भारतसंहिता' शतसाहस्री महाभारत संहिता बन गयी अभेत् एक लाख श्लोकों वाला महभारत बन गया। जिसके विभिन्न संस्करण आज उपलब्ध है–महत्वाद् भरवत्वाच्च महभारतमुच्यते। महाभारत एक आकर ग्रन्थ है। इस सम्बन्ध मे स्पष्टतः कहा गया है।

'यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्क्वचित्।
धर्मे चार्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ ॥'

विशाल ग्रन्थ महाभारत महाकाव्य भी है और धर्मशास्त्र भी। कथानक के व्यवस्थित प्रतिपादन की दृष्टि से इसमें अठारह पर्वों की योजना की गयी है । वह इस प्रकार है–०१ आदिपर्व– चन्द्रवंश का इतिहास और कौरव– पाण्डवों की उत्पत्ति । ०२ सभापर्व– ध्यूतक्रीडा। ०३. वनपर्व– पाण्डवों का वनवास। ०४. विराट्पर्व– पाण्डवों का अज्ञातवास। ०५. उद्योगपर्व– श्रीकृष्ण द्वारा सन्धि का प्रयत्न। ०६. भीष्मपर्व– युद्धारंभ, गीतोपदेश, भीष्म का आहत होकर शरशय्या पर पड्ना। ०७. द्रोणपर्व– अभिमन्यु और द्रोणाचार्य का वध । ०८. कर्णपर्व– कर्ण का युद्ध और वध । ०९.शल्यपर्व– शल्य का युद्ध और वध । १०. सौप्तिक पर्व– सोते हुए पाण्डव पुत्रों का अश्वत्थामा द्वारा वध। ११. स्त्री पर्व– शोका- कुल स्त्रीयों का विलाप। १२. शान्तिपर्व– युधिष्टिर–भीष्म संवाद। १३. अनुशासन पर्व– धर्म और नीति की कथाए, भीष्म का प्राणत्याग। १४. आश्वमेधिका पर्व– युधिष्टिर द्वारा अश्वमेध यज्ञ का अनुष्टान। १५. आश्रमवासिक पर्व– धृतराष्ट्र आदि का वानप्रस्थ आश्रम में प्रवेश। १६. मौसलपर्व– यादवों का परस्पर संघर्ष से विनाश। १७. महाप्रस्थानिक पर्व– पाण्ड्वों की दौंपदी समेत हिमालय यात्रा और १८. स्वर्गारोहण पर्व– पाण्ड्वों का स्वर्गारोहण॥

इस प्रकार, इन अठारह पर्वों के साथ पूरे महभारत युद्ध का वर्णन और आख्यान संबद्ध हैं।

महाभारत का परवर्तो साहित्य पर प्रभाव–

महाभारत एक विशाल आकर ग्रन्थ है। जिसमे एक से बढ्कर एक आख्यान, नीति, धर्मऔर संस्कृति के तत्व अमूल्य कोष के रूप में संरक्षित है। इस आर्ष महाकाव्य की सरलता, रमणीयता, सरसता और विद्वत्ता ने परवर्ती साहित्यकरों को इतना प्रभावित किया कि ने उसे अपना प्रमुख उपजीव्य ग्रन्थ मानने लगे। अपनि रुचि और आवश्यकता के अनुसार किसी रचनाकार कवि ने आख्यान ग्रहण किया, किसी ने पात्र विशेष का चरित्र चित्रण अपनाया, किसी का मन धार्मिक तत्वों में रमा तो उसने अपनी रचना में उसे समाविष्ट किया और किसीने महाभारत की सांस्कृतिक दृष्ठि को अपनी कृति

की झोली में डाल लिया। महाभारतकार ने स्वयं उसी उपजीव्यता का अनेकशः सङ्केत किया है। यथा–

०१. सर्वेषां कविमुख्यानामुपजीव्यो भविष्यति।
पर्जन्य इव भूतानामक्षयो भारत दृमः ॥ (आदिपर्व,१–१०८)

०२. इतिहासोत्तमादस्माज्जायन्ते कविबुद्धयः
पञ्चभ्य इव भूतेभ्यो लोकसंविधयस्त्रयः ॥ (आदि,२.३८६)

०३. इदं कविवरैः सर्वैराख्यानमुपजीव्यते।
उदयप्रेप्सुभिर्भृत्थैरभिजात इवेश्वरः ॥ (आदि. २.३९०)

लौकिक संस्कृत साहित्य की विविध विधाओं में महाभारताश्रित काव्यग्रंथों निर्माण हुआ है और सम्प्रति भी हो रहा है। संस्कृत साहित्य के अध्येता इस तथ्य से भलीभांति परिचित हैं। महाभारतकार के उपयुक्त वचन उस प्रवृत्ति को किसी भाषा– साहित्य विशेष की सीमा में नहीं बांधते। विश्व की समस्त भाषाओं के साहित्य पर उक्त कथन लागू होता है और उसके अनुरूप ही अनेक भाषा– साहित्यों में हम महभारत के प्रभाव का दर्शन करते है।

संस्कृत से प्राकृत, प्राकृत से अपभ्रंश भाषा का उदय हुआ। अपभ्रंश भाषा से हिन्दी भाषा विकसित हुई। हिन्दी के आविर्भाव काल से ही, जब वह क्षेत्रीय बोलियों के रूप में अपनी जड जमा रही थी, साहित्यरचना, वाचिक और लिखित रूप में प्रारम्भ हो गयी थी। आज खडी बोली के रूप में विकसित राष्ट्रभाषा का सम्मान पानेवाली हिन्दी का एक समृद्ध साहित्य है और इस साहित्य पर महाभारत का पर्याप्त प्रभाव है। हम कालानुसार इसका संक्षिप्त विवेचन करेंगे क्योंकि समय की मर्यादा हमे प्रतिबन्धित करती है।

हिन्दी साहित्य मे महाभारतः

हिन्दी साहित्य में महाभारत का पदार्पण विष्णुदास कृत स्वर्गारोहणपर्व के माध्यम से हुआ। यह महाभारत से सम्बद्ध हिन्दी की प्रचीनतम रचना है। जिसका निर्माणकार विक्रम संवत् १४९२ है (प्रायः १४३५ ई) कृष्णभक्त सूरदास से पचासों पर्व पुरानी है यह रचना। विष्णुदास का कोई विशेष परिचय नहीं प्राप्त होतर। उन्होंने हिन्दी स्वर्गारोहणपर्व की रचना ब्रजभाषर के दोहा–चौपाई छन्दों में निबद्ध की है। थथा–

स्वर्गारोहण की कथा पढै– सुनै जो कोई ।
अष्टादशौ पुराण को ताही महाफल होई ॥

१५०१ ई. में ईश्वरदास ने सत्यवती कथा की रचना हिन्दी में की जो महभारत पर आधारित है। ७८ ग्रन्थों के कर्ता जान कवि ने कथा नल दमयंती की रचना सत्रहवीं शताब्दी के प्रारम्भ में की । नरपतिव्यास ने भी नलदमयन्ती की रचना १६२५ ई० में की जो दोहा चौपाई शब्दों में निबद्ध है। इसी प्रकार, मुकुन्दसिंह ने भी १६४१ ई० में की दोहर– चौपाई के माध्यम से नलचरित्र की रचना की। नाथपंथी साधु मेघनाथ ने भगवतगीताभाषा नाम से श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता को हिन्दी में प्रस्तुत किया। यह श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता को सर्व प्राचीन हिन्दी रूपान्तर मानाजाता है। इसका रचनाकार वि. सं. १५५७ मानाजाता है। यह अभी तक अप्रकाशित है और हस्तलेख के रूप में नानाऎ प्रचारिणी समरकाशी के आर्य पुस्तकालय में संरक्षित है। यह पूरा ग्रन्थ चौपाई छन्द में निबद्ध है।

बृन्द कवि ने महाभारत के कुछ प्रसङ्गो को लेकर दि. सं. सत्रहवी शताब्दी में हिन्दी में भारतकथा का निर्माण किया था और वि. सं.

१७५७ में छत्रसिंह कायस्थ द्वारा महाभारत का हिन्दी रूपान्तर उसी नाम से किया गया था। सबल सिंह चौहान कृत हिन्दी महाभारत की सर्वाधिक ख्याति है जिसे इन्होने वि. सं. १७८१ में पूरा किया था। सबल सिंह चौहान का स्पष्ट परिचय नही मिलता। कोई इन्हें जमींदार कहता है, कोई इटावा (उ.प्र.) जिले के किसी जमींदार द्वारा पोषित बतलाता है। अधिकांश विद्वानों का मानना है कि ये औरंगजेब के दरबारि सामन्त मित्रसेना के आश्रित कवि थे।

सबल सिंह चौहान ने उस समय की पश्चिमी हिन्दी बोली के छंदों में समग्र महाभारत का रूपान्तर किया है। अधिकांश रचना में अनेकानेक प्रसङ्गो में वीररस की सुन्दर अभिव्यक्ति हुई है। यह रूपान्तरण भावात्मक एवं वर्जनात्मक शैली का सुन्दर निदर्शन है। महाभारत के द्रोणपर्व का एक सुन्दर प्रसङ्ग दर्शनीय है–

‘अभिमनु पाइ खड्ग परहारे । सन्मुख जेहि पायोतेहि मारे ॥
भूरिच्चवा बान दस छाँटे । कुंवर हाथ के खड्गहि काटे ॥
अर्जुन सुत इमि मार किय, महावीर परचण्ड ।
रूप भयानक देखियत, जिमि जम लीन्हें दण्ड ॥’

सबल सिंह चौहान कृत प्रधमप हिन्दी महाभारत अत्यन्त लोकप्रिय हुआ। उत्तर भारत के गांव की चौपा में तथा विशेष अवसरों पर बीसवीं शताब्दी ई० के मध्य तक इसका गायन होता रहा। महाभारत के कुछ कथावाचक भी अपनी कथाओं मे उसका पुट देते थे।

हिन्दी में हरिवंश पुराण सहित समग्र महाभारत का अनुवाद उन्नीस वीं शताब्दी ई० में काशीनरेश महाराज उदितनारायण सिंह के राजकवि गोकुलनाथ ने प्रस्तुत किया जिसमें उन्हें दो अन्य राजकवियों गोपिनाथ तथा मणिदेवका सहयोग प्राप्त हुआ था। महाभारत का हिन्दी अनुवाद तथा ‘संक्षिप्त हिन्दी महाभारत’ गीताप्रेस, गोरख्पुर से प्रकाशित है।

महाभारतीय हिन्दी सहित्य में आगे बढ्ने से शर्व, हिन्दी साहित्य में कृष्णभक्ति की अजस्र धार(प्रवाहित करनेवालो भक्तकवि सूरदास (१४७८–१५८३ ई०) और उनकी रचनाओं (भक्ति के पदों) का उल्लेख करना अवश्यक है। सूरसागर[1] उनके द्वारा निर्मित पदों का विशाल काय प्रामाणिक सड्ग्रह है। सूरसागर की रचना भागवत महापुराण की प्रबन्ध योजना के अनुरूप द्वादश स्कन्धों में हुई है। वैसे तो सूरदास श्रीकृष्ण की मधुर बाललीलाओं के गायक के रूप में सुविख्यात हैं। किन्तु वे महाभारत के सफल सूत्रधार और पराक्रमी योद्धा तथा कूटनीतिज्ञ श्रीकृष्ण के उस स्वरूप का गान करना नहें भूलते। उह्रोने महाभारत के श्रीकृष्ण परक अनेक प्रसङ्गो को अपने पदों में अनुस्यूत करके अपने परमारध्य की स्तुति की है। यध्यपि समग्र सूरसागर मेम महाभारतीय कथानकों से सम्बद्धय पद प्राप्त हैं तथापि उस सम्बन्ध में प्रथम स्कन्ध महत्वपूर्ण है। अद्भुत है वे प्रसङ्ग और अनुपम हैं सूरदास के वे पद। यहाँ निदर्शनार्थ कतिपय पद उदाहृत है– प्रथम स्कन्ध के पदसंख्या २८२ में कुन्ती कृष्ण से विनय कर रही है–

‘प्रभुजू, विपदा भली विचारी ।
धिक यह राज विमुख चरनानि तैं, कहाते पाण्डु की नारी ।
लाखा मन्दिर कौरवरचिमयौ तहँ राखे बनवारी ।

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[1] सूरसागर (दो खण्ड): सम्पादक– श्री नन्ददुलारे वाजपेयी, प्रकाशक– नागरी–प्रचारिणी सभा, काशी: विक्रम संवत् २०३५.

अंबर हरत सभा में कृष्णा सोकसिंधु तैं तारी ।
अतिथि रिषीस्वर सापन आये सोच भयो जिय भारी ।
स्वल्प साग तैं तृप्त किए सब, कठिन आपदा टारी ।
जन अर्जुन की रच्छा कारन सारथि भए मुरारी।
सोई सूर सहाइ हमारे, सन्तानि के हितकारी’ ॥२८२॥

पद सं. २९० में परीक्षित की पूरी कथा राग सारंग में निबद्ध है।
महाभारत युद्ध के दौरात भीष्म द्वारा कृष्ण काप्रण
तोड्ने की प्रतिज्ञा सुविदित है।
सूरदास ने राग मल्हार में उसे सहज ही निबद्ध किया है–

आजु जौ हरिहि न सस्त्र गहाऊँ।
तौ लाजौं गंगा जननी कौं, सांतनु सुत न कहाऊँ ।
स्पंदन खंडि महारथि खंडौं कपिधज सहित गिराऊँ।
पांड्व दल सन्मुख हुवै धाऊँ सरितर रूधि बहऊँ।
इती न करौं सपथ तौ हरि की, छत्रिय गतिहिं न पाऊँ।
सूरदास रनभूमि विजय बिनु, जियतन पीढि दिखाऊँ ॥२७०॥

दशम स्कन्ध के ४३०३ वें पद सें सुभद्राविवाह का
रोचक वर्णन है। कहि विवाह अर्जुन घर आए। इस प्रकार,
सूरसागर में महभारत के सैकडो प्रसंग गेयपदों में वर्णित है।

महाभारत के आश्वमेधिक पर्व के कथानक पर संस्कृत में एक स्वतन्त्र रचना जैमिनिपुराण या जैमिनीयाश्वमेध उपलब्ध है। अयोध्या निवासी पण्डित सरजूराम ने उसके आश्रय से जैमिनीपुराणभाषा की रचना वि० सं. उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी में की है। इस हिन्दी काव्य में अर्जुन और बभ्रुवाहन के युद्ध का रोमाञ्चकारी वर्णन है।

जयपुर नरेश महाराज रामसिंह के आश्रित कुलपति मिश्र (१६६०–१७००) ने महाभारत के द्रोणपर्व को उपजीव्य बनाकर सङ्ग्रामसार नामक काव्य की रचना की इसी काल के गुमान्मिश्र ने वनपर्व की नल कथा को आधार बनकर नैषधचरित नामक काव्य लिखा। कुछ लोगों की धारणा है की उन्होंने श्रीहर्ष द्वारा रचित नैषधीयचरितम् महाकाव्य का ही हिन्दी प्रधानुवाद किया था। जो भी हो, गुमानमिश्र की यह रचना महाभारत के उपख्यान से सम्बद्ध है। उसी काल के कवि नेवाज ने महाभारतीय शकुन्तलोपाख्यान के आधार पर शकुन्तला नाटक हिन्दी में लिखा। सम्भव है की यह भी महाकवि कालिदास कृत ‘अभिज्ञानशाकुन्तलम्’ का हिन्दी रूपान्तर हो।

रीतिकालीन कवि चिन्तामणि (१६००–१६८० ई.) ने महाभारत में चित्रित श्रीकृष्ण की भूमिका का आश्रय लेकर कृष्णचरित नामक हिन्दी काव्य का प्रणयन किया। उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी ई० के नबलसिंह ने महाभारत के कथानक को संक्षेपतः प्रस्तुत करने लिये महाभारत वार्तिक नामक ग्रन्थ की रचना की। काशी वासी वैश्य और आधुनिक हिन्दी कविता के प्रवर्तक–पुरोधर भारतेन्दु हरिश्चन्द्र के पिता गोपालचन्द्र गिरिधरदास ने उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी ई० के मध्यकाल में महाभारत पर आश्रित महाकाव्य जरासन्ध वध की रचनाकी। इसमें श्रीकृष्ण के निर्देशन में मध्यम पाण्ड्व भीम द्वारा जरासन्ध के शरीर को दोनों पैर पकड्कर मध्य से चीर देने और फलतः उसकी मृत्यु होजाने का बडा ही प्रभावकारी वर्णन किया गया है। इन्हीं के द्वारा लिखा गया काव्य बलराम कथामृत भी महाभारत के बलराम विषयक कथानकों का पुट लिये हुई है। गोपालचन्द्र गिरिधरदास ने १८५७ ई० में ‘नहुष’ नामक नाटक की भी रचना की थी जिसमें उनकी शिबिकार दोने वाले महथों द्वार उन्हें सपायानि में जन्म लेने का शाप वर्णित है। महाभारत के कई पर्वों में इनका वृत्तान्त वर्णित है।

मध्यभारत के राधवगढ़ राज्य (रिपासत) के राजकुमार ठाकुर जगन्मोंहन सिंह ने शुक्राचार्य की पुत्री देवयानी के चरित को आधार बनाकर देवयानी शीर्षिक से एक हिन्दी काव्य का निर्माण किया। देवयानी की कथा महाभारत के आदिपर्व में सविस्तार उपलब्ध है। इस काव्य का रचनाकार प्राय: उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी ई० का अन्तिम भाग है। सन् १८६३ ई० में राजा लक्ष्मण सिंह ने हिन्दी में अभिज्ञान शकुन्तल का अनुवाद किया है। सन् १८८५ ई० में गजराज सिंह ने द्रौपदी–हरण नाटक् की रचना की और १८९५ ई० में बालकृष्णभट् ने नलदमयन्ती स्वयंवर नामक नाटक का निर्माण किया। १८९६ ई० में शालिग्राम लाया ने अभिमन्यु नाटक की रचना की। १९०५ ई० में महावीर सिंह ने नलदमयन्ती कथा को रूपक के ढाँचे में ढाल कर नलदमयन्ती नाटक का निर्माण किया। एक वर्ष पस्चात ही इसी कथानक को लेकर १९०६ ई० में सुदर्शनाचार्य ने अनर्घनलचरित नाटक का प्रणयन किया। नाटकों के इस दौर में १९०६ ई० में ही गौरचरण गोस्वामी ने अभिमन्यु वध नाम से एक नाटक की रचना की। बाकेविहारी लाल ने १९०८ ई० में सावित्री शीर्षिक से एक नाटिका की रचना की। एक अन्य नाटिका उर्वशी का प्रणयन १९१० ई० में लक्ष्मीप्रसाद ने की और १९१०ई० में ही शकुन्तला नामक नाटिका को शिवानंद मिश्र ने लिखा। उर्वशी का वृत्तान्त महाभारत के आदिपर्व, वनपर्व आदि कई पर्वों में वर्णित है। इन्द्रलोक की अप्सरा उर्वशी का विवाह महाराज पुरूरवा से हुआ था किन्तु शर्तभङ्ग हो जाते के कारण यह पुन: इन्द्रलोक चली गयी थी। महाभारत के अनुसार इसने अर्जुन से भी प्रणय प्रस्ताव किया था किन्तु अर्जुन द्वार 'अनुचित' कहकर निषेध किये जाने पर इसने अर्जुन को शाप दे दिया था।

१९१५ में पं. बद्रीनाथभट् ने महाभारत की कथा को कुरुवनदहन नाम से संक्षेपत: एक रूपक का आकार दिया था तथा १९१६ इ० में माधवशुक्ल ने महाभारतपूर्वार्द्ध नाम से एक ग्रन्थ की रचना की थी। १९१७ ई० में हरिदास मणिक ने पाण्डव प्रताप नाटक की रचना की इसका अङ्गीरस वीररस है और यह अर्जुन– भीम के शौर्य पर केन्द्रित है। १९१८ ई० में माखनलाल चतुर्वेदी ने कृष्ण और अर्जुन के युद्ध का प्रसङ्ग (१) लेकर कृष्णार्जुन युद्ध नाटक की रचना की है। पं. रामचरित उपाध्याय (बलिया, उत्तरप्रदेश) ने देवि द्रौपदी नाम से १९२१ ई० में एक नाटक की रचना की है। उपाध्यायजी संस्कृत के अच्छे ज्ञाता थे और धर्मोपदेशक थे। महाभारत मे वर्णित द्रौपदी के वृत्तान्त को आधार बनाकर आपने सरल हिन्दी में इस अभिनय नाटक का निर्माण किया। १९२४ ई० में. रामनरेश त्रिपाठी ने सुभद्रा नामक नाटक का प्रणयन किया। इसमें विशेषत: अर्जुन द्वारा श्रीक्रुष्ण की सम्मती से सुभद्रा के हरण की घटना रूपायित की गयी है। गङ्गाप्रसाद आरोरा ने १९२५ ई० में सावित्री– सत्यवान् के कथानक को आधार बनाकर सावित्री– सत्यवान् नाटक का लेखन किया। १९२६ ई० में परिपूर्णानन्दवर्मा (काशी, डां सम्पूर्णानन्द के भाई) ने वीर अभिमन्यु नामक नाटक की रचना की जिसका केन्द्रविन्दु है चक्रव्यूह का युद्ध।

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१. प्रयास करने पर भी महाभारत में कृष्ण और अर्जुन के परस्पर युद्ध का प्रसङ्ग मुझे नहीं प्रापा हो सका।

अपने प्रिय वीरपुत्र अभिमन्यु के वध से गाण्डीवधारी पार्थ अर्जुन बहुत दुःखी हुए । अभिमन्युवध की मुख्यभूमिका में रहे जयद्रथ (दुर्योधन का बहनोई दुःशला क पति) के वध की प्रतिज्ञा अर्जुन ने की हि अगले दिन सूर्यास्त से पूर्व करने की कर डाली। जयद्रथ रणक्षेत्र से हट्कर कहीं थिप गया। सूर्य अस्ताचल की और प्रस्थान करने लगे। प्रिय सखा अर्जुन के प्राण को पूर्ण करने के लिये श्रीकृष्ण ने अपने सुदर्शन चक्र से सूर्य को आच्छादितकर दिय। अंधोरा छा गया। सूर्यास्त जानकर निर्भय हुआ जयद्रथ अर्जुन के प्राणत्याग को देखने के लिये उसके समीप आगया। तब श्रीकृष्ण ने अर्जुन को सङ्केत करते हुए अपना चक्र सूर्य के ऊपर सेहरा लिया। सर्वत्र सूर्य का प्रकाश फैता गया। जयद्रथ अचानक ऐसा हुआ देखकर भागने लगा तभी अर्जुन ने एक ही बाणसे उसके प्राण हरा लिए। गोकुलचन्द्र वर्मा ने इसी कथानक के आधार पर १९२९ ई० में जयद्रथ वध नामक नाटक लिखा।

महाभारत के आधार पर जिस 'भीष्मप्रतिज्ञा' को लेकर सन्तकवि सूरदास ने एक पद बनाकर था–'आजु जौं हरिहि न शस्त्र गहाऊँ'– उसी भीष्मप्रतिज्ञा की महाभारतीय घटना के आधार पर १९३४ ई० में कैलासनाथ भटनागर ने भीष्मप्रतिज्ञा नाटक की रचना की। रुक्मिणी के साथ श्रीकृष्ण के विवाह का कथानक लेकर १९३७ ई० में अयोध्या सिंह उपाध्याय 'हरिऔध' ने रुक्मिणि परिणय–नामक नाटक की सर्जना की १९२८ ई० में कवि जगन्नाथ शरण ने 'कुरुक्षेत्र' शीर्षिक से महाभारत युद्ध की घटना को एक रूपक का आकार प्रदान किया। उदयशंकर भट् ने १९३७ ई० में सत्यवती के प्रसङ्ग को लेकर मत्स्यगन्धा नामक गीतिनाव्य रचनाकी। प्रसिद्ध नाटककार श्रीरामकुमार वर्मा ने महाभारत के एक सामन्य किन्तु विशिष्ट पात्र को प्रधानतर प्रदान करते हुए एकलव्य नाटक की रचना की । रंगेय राघव ने पाञ्चाली नामक काव्य का निर्माण किया जिसकें द्रौपदी की गाथा निबद्ध है। उसी चरित्र को लेकर नरेन्द्रशर्मा ने द्रौपदी शीर्षिक खण्डकाव्य लिखा। इसमें कवी ने घोटे से कलेबर में समग्र महाभारत की पीड़ा को भाने का भासकप्रयासविवर है। कवि ने द्रौपदी का परिचय इन शब्दों में दिपर है–

आनन्द पुलक आट्लाद, दिव्य उन्माद देह मन वाणी।
द्रौपदी जीवनी शक्ति पंचतत्त्वों की वह कल्याणी।
योगेश्वर की वह बहन योगिनी शक्ति कर्म की तृष्णा।
पंचाग्नि शक्ति साकार, व्योम अवतार–कारिणी कृष्णा। (५०३०)

नरेन्द्रशर्मा का दूसरा प्रबन्ध काव्य उत्तरजय भी महाभारत पर ही आधारित है। इसमें युधिष्ठिर और अश्वत्थामा को खण्डित और पीडाभोगी दिखाया गया है। इसमें चित्रित युधिष्ठिर अपने स्वभाव और नियति के द्वन्द्व से घिरे हुए हैं और अश्वत्थाम श्रेष्ठ सामर्थ्यवान् अतिरथी होते हुए भी पीडाभीरु है।

कवि केदारनाथ मिश्र 'प्रभात' ने बीसवीं शताब्दी ई० के पूर्वार्द्ध में महाभारत के दो प्रसिद्ध और महत्वपूर्ण पात्रों को केर्द्रित करके दो काव्यों की रचना की। द्रौपदी प्रबन्ध काव्य है और दानवीर कर्ण खण्ड काव्य है। द्रौपदी में एक आदर्श भारतीय नारी (क्षत्राणी) का चित्रण है और 'दानवीरकर्ण' में उसकी दानवीरता का प्रभावकारी निरूपण है। सेट गोविन्ददास ने १९४२ ई० में कर्ण नामक नाटक की रचना की। लक्ष्मीनारायण मिश्र ने चक्रव्यूह नामक नाटक को निर्माण किया जिसमें अभिमन्यु के साहसपूर्ण पराक्रम को प्रदर्शित किया गया है। महाभारत के आदिपर्व में महाराज नहुष के द्वितीय पुत्र ययाति की कथा विस्तारपूर्वक वर्णित है। देवयानी और शर्मिष्टा

उनकी रानियाँ थी। इसी राजर्षि ययाति के चरित को लेकर पण्डित गोविन्दवल्लभपन्त ने १९४७ ई० में ययाति नामक नाटक का निर्माण किया है। १९७० ई० में सुरेन्द्रवर्मा ने द्रौपदी नामक नाटक के रचना की है।

महाभारत के श्रीकृष्ण को दृष्टि में रखकर श्रीद्वारका प्रसाद मिश्र ने रामायण की अनुकृति के रूप में कृष्णायन महाकाव्य का प्रणयन किया है। यह महाकाव्य अवधीभाषा में लिखा गया है। प्रबन्ध योजना में इसपर सन्तकवि तुलसीदास कृत रामचरितमानस के छाप है। इसमें श्रीमद्भागवत के बाल और किशोर कृष्ण की अपेक्षा महाभारत के राजनीतिज्ञ कृष्ण का चरित्र सविस्तार वर्णित किया गया है।

महाभारत के आदिपर्व में परीक्षित के पुत्र जनमेजय द्वारा किये गये सर्पयज्ञ अथवा नागयज्ञ का परिचय प्राप्त होता है। कामायनी के कर्ता काशीवासी कवि जयशङ्कर प्रसाद ने इसके आधार पर जनमेजय का नागयज्ञ नामक नाटक की रचना की। प्रसाद जी ने उसके रचना १९२६ ई०. में की थी। इस नाव्य रचना के पूर्व १९०९ ई० में इनका खण्डकाव्य उर्वशी रचित और प्रकाशित हो चुका था। 'उर्वशी' काव्य, महाभारत में चित्रित उर्वशी के उपाख्यान पर आधारित है जो आदिपर्व, सभापर्व और वनपर्व में प्राप्त होता है।

महाकवि जयशंकर प्रसाद की महाभारतश्रित कृतियों के साथ ही हम आधुनिक हिन्दी साहित्य में प्रवेशा करते हैं। इस क्रम में इसकी प्रथम दृष्टि राष्ट्रकवि श्री मैथिलीशरण गुप्त पर पड़ती है। उन्होंने महाभारत को उपजीव्यो बनाकर हिन्दी सहित्य को अनेक बहुमूल्य काव्य कृतियाँ प्रदान की हैं। उनकी इन रचनावों की चर्चा करने से पूर्व मैं एक विशेष बात का जिक्रकरना चाहता हूँ। संयोग से मेरे हाथ 'हिन्दी–प्रवेशिक' नामक एक पुरानी पुस्तक लग गयी। जिसके आदि– अन्त के कुछ पृष्ठ नही हैं। इसमें प्राथमिक विद्यालय की कक्षा तीन के छात्रों के लिए हिन्दी पाठों का संकलन है। मुझे इसके पाठों का स्तर देख कर विस्मय हुआ। इसमे श्री मैथिलीशरण गुप्त की एक कविता भी संकलित है। जिसका शीर्षक है 'कुन्ती और कर्ण' । इसमें कुल सत्ताईस पध्य हैं। कुछ पध्य यहाँ उद्धृत कर रहा हूँ–

सुनकर यह सब हाल युद्ध होना निस्चित कर,
कुन्ति कर्ण समीप गई गंगा के तट पर।
था उसका उद्देश्य कर्ण को समझाने का,
तथा मना कर आत्मपक्ष में कर लेने का ॥२॥

'किये चित्त एकाग्र सूर्य में दृष्टि लाये,
अस्फुट स्वर से वेदमन्त्र पढ़ता मन भाये।
सलिल मग्न आकाश सुहाता था वह ऐसे,
अलि–कुल–कलकल–कलित–कमल फूला हो जैसे'॥४॥

'मर्मस्पर्शो वचन श्रवण कर भी कुन्ती के,
बदले नहीं विचार कर्ण के निश्चल जी के।
प्रत्युत्तर फिर । लगा उसे देने वह ऐसे,
मुरज मधुर गम्भीर धोष करत है जैसे'॥१९॥

इस लम्भी संवादात्मक कविता के अन्त में की गयी गुप्त जी के टिप्पणी ध्यातव्य है– 'यह दृश्य देख कर कौनजन, करतायों न विचार हैं। इस क्षणभंगुर संसार में एक धर्म ही सार है।'

मैथिलीशरण गुप्त ने महाभारत की एक पात्र अप्सरा तिलोत्तमा पर आधारित नाटक तिलोत्तमा की रचना की तिलोत्तमा' का उपाख्यान महाभारत के आदिपर्व में प्राप्त होता है॥ ब्रह्मा के आदेश से विश्वकर्मा ने तीनों लोकों के दर्शनीय पदार्थों के सारतत्वों तथा भास्वर रत्नराशियों के योग से इसका निर्माण किया था। इसने अर्जुन के जन्म के अवसर पर आकर उत्सव में नृत्य किया था।

गुप्तजी ने जयद्रथवध काव्य की रचना १९१० ई० में की। अर्जुन द्वारा जयद्रथ का वध महाभारत की एक प्रसिद्ध घटना है। इस काव्य में इस प्रसिद्ध कथानक के साथ भारतीय संस्कृति और राष्ट्रीयता का भंजुरा निर्माण करके गुप्त जी ने इसके साहित्यिक कलेवर को अभिनव रूप प्रदान किया है।

श्री मैथिलीशरण गुप्त के १९३६ ई० में 'द्वापर' काव्य का प्रकार हुआ। इसकी चतुर्थवृत्ति की भूमिका से ज्ञात होता है कि इस काव्य में श्रीमद्भागवत और महाभारत के श्रीकृष्ण को प्रकाशित करने की योजना थी। अत: इसके तीनखण्डों के प्रणयन की योजना थी– प्रथम 'गोपाल' द्वितीय 'द्वारकाधीश' और तृतीय 'योगिराज' । इस प्रकार श्रीकृष्ण का व्यक्तित्व त्रिधा अभिव्यक्त होता जो उनके जीवन के तीन कालखण्डों की कहानी होती। किन्तु यह अभीष्ट पूरा न एक और 'द्वापर' का प्रकाशन किन्हीं कारणों से अपूर्ण को ही पूर्ण होसका दिया गया। यहाँ 'द्वारकाधीश' के मित्र विप्रसुधामा की कुछ 'द्वापरगत' उक्तियाँ प्रस्तुत हैं मानकर

> 'सोना पाकर भी क्या सुख से तू सोने पावेगी?
> बढ़ती हुई लालसर तुझको कहाँ न लेजावेगी?
> काम, क्रोध, मद,मोह समय पर लोभ सदैव सभी को।
> कर्मों के अनुसार किन्तु है देता दैव सभी को॥'
> 'आज द्वारकाधीश बना है' मेरा व्रजवनचारी।
> काली कमली छोड़् चुका है वह पीताम्बर्धारी।
> मेर मुकुट वाले के माये रत्न किरीट खिला है।
> गुंजा के बदले राजमुक्ता यों सब उसे मिला है॥'
> 'तनिक छाँछ में जिसे गोपियां नाच नचाया कातीं।
> राजनीतियां आ उसके घर अब हैं पानी भरतीं।
> मुरली नहीं आज है शासनचक्र हाथ में उसके।
> तूही बता, निभूँगा कैसे वहां साथ में उसके?॥'

राष्ट्रकवि श्री रामधारी सिंह 'दिनकर' में अपने को युगानुकूल बनालेने का गुण राष्ट्कवि श्रीमैथिलीशरण गुप्त के ही समान रहा है। दोनों की रचनाएं देशप्रेम और राष्ट्रीयता की भावना से भरी हुई हैं। 'हूँकार' में सङ्कलित उनकी कविताओं का स्वर 'सामधेनी' में भी उसी प्रकार मुखरित है।

> 'रे रोक युधिष्ठिर को न यहाँ, जानें दो उनको स्वर्ग धीर।
> पर फिरा हमें गाण्डीव, गदा,लौटा दे अर्जुन भीम वीर॥'

देश की दुर्दशा देखकर दिनकर जी का'हिमालय' से यह आज़ाभयं निवेदन है। वे अपनी इस कविता के प्रतीकों का चयन महाभारत की कथा से ही करते हैं। महाभारत के कथानक को आधार बनाकर श्रीरामधारी सिंह 'दिनकर' ने कई प्रबन्ध काव्यों का निर्माण किया है कुरुक्षेत्र उनमें से एक है । कुरुक्षेत्र की रचना के विषय मे दिनकर स्वयं कहते हैं– 'कुरुक्षेत्र की रचना भगवान् व्यास के अनुकरण पर नहीं हुई है और न महाभारत को दुहराना मेरा उद्देश्य था।' किसी समस्या के समाधान के लिए जब युद्ध के

अतिरिक्त अन्य कोई विकल्प न बचे, तो वे युद्ध अनिवार्य हो जाता है। इसलिए महाभारत युद्ध हुआ। यह युद्ध सामान्य न था, भीषण और लोकसंहार एक था। इसका दोषी कौन है? इसी प्रकार का उत्तर कबि कुरुक्षेत्र में ढूंढ रहा है।

कुरुक्षेत्र पर महाभारत के उत्तरभाग शान्तिपर्व का प्रभाव है। सम्भवतः कवि ने कुरुक्षेत्र मे पात्रों का परिवर्तन करके 'गीता' को एक नया रूप, नया स्वरप्रधान किया है। अर्जुन को युद्ध से विरक्ति महाभारत के प्रारम्भ में हुई थी और युधिष्ठिर को महाभारत के अन्त में अपनी व्यथा, अपना पश्चात्ताप वे भीष्म के सम्मुख रखते हैं–

ध्वंसजन्य सुख? या कि साश्रु दुःख शान्तिजन्य?
शरत नहीं कौन बरत नीति के विरुद्ध है।
जानता नहीं मैं कुरुक्षेत्र में खिला है पुण्य,
या महान् पाप यहाँ फूटा बन युद्ध है॥
अन्ततः कुरुक्षेत्र एक सन्देश देता है–
'लोभ की लडाई क्षात्र धर्म के विरुद्ध है।'

अर्जुन से भी शौर्य में कही बढ़कर धनुर्धर, वीर और उदार दानी कर्ण की और किसी प्राचीन कवि का ध्यान नहीं गया। किन्तु आधुनिक हिन्दी साहित्य के जिनकवियों मे कर्ण को अपने काव्य का नायक बनाकर, उनमें से श्रीरामधारी सिंह दिनकर एक समर्थ कवि हैं। उन्होंने कर्ण की यशोगाथा को अपने श्रेष्ठ काव्य 'रश्मिरथी' का विषयबनाया है। यह वही कुन्तीपुत्र अथवा राधेय सूतपुत्र कर्ज है जो पुंस्त्व की ललकार से अहम्मन्य वीरों को हतप्रभ कर देता है–

'सूतो वा सूतपुत्रो वा यो वा को वा भवाम्यहम्।
दैवायत्तं कुले जन्म मदायत्तं तु पौरूषम्।' (वेणीसंहार)

रश्मिरथि काव्य सात सर्गों में विभक्त है। इन सात सर्गों में धनुर्धर बालक कर्ण से लेकर कौरवसेनापति महारथी कर्ण का सम्पूर्ण जीवन चरित वर्णित है। कर्ण को उसकी माँ कुन्ती और पाण्डवों के पुरोधा श्रीकृष्ण ने बहुधा समझाते था। बरगलाने की चेष्टा की किन्तु सुयोधना के प्रति कृतज्ञ कर्ण अपने निश्चय से तनिक भी विचलित न हुआ। उसे अपने चरित्र और पौरुष पर पूरा भरोसा है। इसी लिए वह महाभारत को अर्जुन–कर्ण के बीच होने वाला महासभाभानत है। अन्तिम पश्चात्ताप उसका यही है–

'कहा जो आपने, सब कुन्छ सही है ।
मगर अपनी चिन्ता मुझे नहीं है ।
सुयोधन हेतु ही पछता रहा हूँ।
बिना विजयी बनाये जा रहा हूँ ॥'

महाभारत के पश्चात् बदली परिस्थितियों में और भी अनेक हिन्दी काव्य 'कर्ण' को नायक बनाकर लिखे गये। इनमें से कुछ का उल्लेख पूर्व में किया जा चुका है। उनके बाद रश्मिरथी के अतिरिक्त पं. लक्ष्मीनारायणा मिश्र का कर्ण महाकाव्य, श्री गोपालशर्मा रुद्र का कर्ण काव्य, श्री आनन्दकुमार का अङ्गराज, श्री मोहनलाल अवस्ती का महारथी काव्य प्रसिद्ध है।

दिनकर जी ने उर्वशी नामक पाँच अङ्कों के काव्य रूपक की भी रचना की है। इसका कथानक नितान्व वैदिक और पौराणिक है। महाभारत में उर्वशी का उपाख्यान सुविदित है। उर्वशी और राजर्षि पुरूरवा की प्रणय कथा को दिनकरजी ने अपनी प्रतिभा और काव्य कौशल से एक नयेरूप में ढाला है।

श्री धर्मवीर भारती द्वारा विरचित अन्धायुग रूपक महाभारताश्रित आधुनिक हिन्दी रचनाओं में एक महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखता है। यह रूपक प्रचीन के आधार पर अर्वाचीन की व्यञ्जना करता है। इस दृश्य काव्य में जिन समस्याओं को उठाया गया हैं, उनके सफल निर्वाह के लिए महाभारत की उत्तरार्धगत घट्नाओं का आश्रय ग्रहण किया गया है। अन्धायुग की अधिकांश कथावस्तु प्रख्यात है, केवल कुछ तत्व उत्पाध्य है।

अन्धायुग का रचनाकाल सितम्बर १९५४ई० है। उसमें पाँच अङ्क है और इसका अनेकशः सफल मञ्चन हो चुका है और इसका रेडियो रूपान्तर भी हुआ है। अन्धायुग का घटनाकाल महाभारत के अट्ारहवें दिन की संध्या से प्रभासतीये में श्रीकृष्ण के परलोक गमन तक है। प्रथम अङ्क के आरम्भ में ही इस काव्य रूपक के रामकृष्ण का प्रतीकात्मक हेतु उपस्थापित किया गया है–

‘अन्धों से शोभित था युगका सिंहासन,
दोनो ही पक्षों में विवेक ही हारा,
दोनों ही पक्षों में जीत अन्धापन,
भय का अन्धापन, ममता का अन्धापन,
अधिकारों का अन्धापन जीत गया,
जो कुछ सुन्दर था, शुभ या, कोमलतम था,
वह हार गया-----द्वापर युग बीत गया॥
और इस काव्यरूपक का अन्तिम अंश जो सन्देश दे रहा है,
वह मननीय है–
उस दिन जो अन्धा युग अवतरित हुआ जग पर
बीतता नहीं रह रह का दोहराता है
हर क्षण अँधियारा गहरा होता जाता है
हम सब के मन में गहरा उतर गया है युग
अँधियार है, अश्वत्थामा है, संजय है
है दासवृत्ति उन दोनों वृद्ध प्रहरियों की
अन्धा संशय है लज्जाजनक पराजय है।
पर एक तत्व है बीजरूप स्थित मन में
साहस में, स्वतंत्रा में, नूतन सर्जन में
वह है निरपेक्ष उतरता है पर जीवन में
दायित्व युक्त, मर्यादीत मुक्त आचरण में
उतना जो अंश हमारे मन का है
वह अर्द्धसत्य से, ब्रह्मास्त्रों के भय से
मानव– भविष्य को हरदम रहे बचाता
अन्धे संशय, दासता, पराजय से॥

अभी तक हमने महाभारत पर आश्रित श्रव्यकाव्य और दृश्यकाव्य की प्रस्तुति क आलोचन किया। कहना न होगा किसे भी रचनाओं की संख्या पर्याप्त है। अब हम आधुनिक काल के वर्तमान की कुछ रचनाओं पर दृष्टिपात करेंगे जो महाभारत के तत्वप्रसङ्गों को सर्वात्मना प्रस्तुत करती हैं। ये हिन्दी के कतिपय आधुनिक उपन्यास हैं।

चर्चित उपन्यासकार श्री नरेन्द्रकोहली ने महाभारत के समग्र कथानक को अपने उपन्यास महासमर (नौ खण्ड) में उतारने का श्लाघ्य प्रयत्न किया है। महासमर वस्तुतः एक उपन्यास श्रृंखला है जो कथ्य की दृष्टि से परस्पर अनुस्यूत है। महासमर के सभी नौ खण्ड भिन्न–भिन्न सार्थक शीर्षिकों के साथ, वाणी प्रकाशन, नई दिल्ली से सन २०११ से २०१४ ई० मे प्रकाशित हुए है।

महाभारत की अन्तर्कथा से संवलित महासमर उपन्यास कौरव–पाण्डव के मध्य हुए महासंग्राम से सम्बद्ध है। महासमर में

उपन्यासकार ने उस कथा को आधुनिक सामाजिक दृष्टि से व्याख्यायित किया है। महासमर का सूत्ररूप में सन्देश यह है कि मनुष्य को धर्म पूर्वक विशुद्ध जीवन– यापन करना चाहिए। उसे दूसरों का हड्प लेने को लोभ– मोह नहीं होना चाहिए। उसे ईर्ष्या, क्रोध और अहङ्कार से दूर रहना चाहिए तभी वह शान्त और सुखी हो सकता है। उसे समाज को समग्रता की दृष्टि से देखते हुए सन्तुष्ट रहना चाहिए। पूर्णत्व को खण्डशः नहीं देखना चाहिए। पूर्णत्व में पूर्णत्व का ही अन्वेषण करना चाहिए। मनुष्यत्व से बढ़कर अन्य कोई श्रेष्ठ नहीं है।

नौ खण्डों वाले महासमर का कलेवर अत्यन्त विशाल है। यहाँ प्रत्येक खण्ड की कथावस्तु संक्षेप में क्रमशः प्रस्तुत की जा रही है–

खण्ड–१ 'बन्धन' – इसमें शान्तनु, सत्यवती,और भीष्म के मनोविज्ञान तथा जीवन मूल्यों की कथा है। इनकी चरित्रगत विशेषताओं के कारण हस्तिनापुर बन्धन में पड् जाता है।

खण्ड–२– अधिकार – इसमें अधिकारों की प्राप्ती के लिए षड्यन्त्रों तथा संघर्षों का वर्णन है। इस संघर्ष में दवे हुए असहायों की पीडा की कथा है। अधिकार के प्रति आसक्ति मनुष्य को क्रूर निष्ठुर और नृशंस बना देती है।

खण्ड ३– कर्म– इसमें युधिष्ठिर के युवराज के रूप में अभिषिक्त होकर बाद में हस्तिनापुर से निष्कासित होने की कथा है। इसमें यह सन्देश भी है कि अधर्म विजय प्राप्त करके भी सदा दुःखी और अतृप्त रहता है।

खण्ड ४– धर्म– इस खण्ड में पाण्डवों के खाण्डवप्रस्थ के आगमन से लेकर ध्यूतक्रीडा में हारने तक की कथा है। धर्म की विजय की भूमिका यहाँ तैयार की जाती है और यह भी निश्चित कियाजाता है कि दुष्टदलनही धर्म का सर्वप्रथम दायित्व है।

खण्ड ५– अन्तराल– इसमें ध्यूतक्रीडा में पराजय के पश्चात, पाण्डवों के वनवास की कथा है। यहाँ तप द्वारा धर्म अपनी शक्ति प्राप्त करता है। यहाँ यह भी उद्घाटन है कि अहङ्कार और मोह से ग्ररत प्राणी कभी धर्म की ओर उन्मुख नही हो।

खण्ड ६–प्रच्छन्न– इसमें कई घटनाओं द्वारा मनुष्य के प्रच्छन्न मन के भावों का उद्घाटन है। इसमें शकुनि के कुतन्त्रों और दुर्योधन की कुटिल मानसिकताका वर्णन है। इसमें युद्ध की विभीषिका की सूचना भी है और मानसिक विकृतियों द्वारा ही मनुष्य सर्वनाश की ओरले जाना जाता है– इसका साक्षी भी यह खण्ड है।

खण्ड ७–प्रत्यक्ष– इसमें भीष्म पर्व ही प्रत्पक्ष है। युद्ध के प्रथम कारण की भी कथा है। यहाँ कृष्ण की नीति की गहराई का भी अनुमान होता है।

खण्ड ८– निर्बन्ध– इस खण्ड में द्रोणपर्व से लेकर शान्तिपर्व तक की कथा अवस्तित है। इसमें प्रतिरोध का भयानक रूप दिखाई पड्ता है। अहंकार का कुफल वर्णित है तथा यह भी निरूपित है कि धर्म बाँधता नहीं, मुक्त करना है।

खण्ड ९– आनुषङ्गिक– यह महासमर का नेपथ्य है और इस उपन्यास के सभी आठ खण्डों को अच्छी तरह समझने में एक सफल उत्प्रेरक की भूमिका में है। श्री नरेन्द्र कोहली द्वारा विरचित महासमर महाभारत को पढ्ने और समझने की नई दृष्टि देता है।

इस प्रकार, महासमर उपन्यास में पूरा महाभारत अभिव्यक्त है । इसके नौ खण्डों के अतिरिक्त महभारत के कतिपय पात्रों को लेकर भी श्रीनरेन्द्र कोहिली ने अधोलिखित उपन्यास लिखे है– अभियान (१९८१ई०), वसुदेव (२००७ ई०), सैरन्ध्री (२००९ ई०)। मत्स्यगन्धा (२०११ ई०), हिडिम्बा (२०१२ई०), और कुन्ती (२०१२ई०) ।

वाराणसी में एक ऐसाभी साहित्यकार हुआ जो अपने जीवन के उत्तरार्ध में हिन्दी साहित्याकार में छा गया। बचपन में सड्क की पटरी पर गमछा बेचने से शुरू रके, इण्टरकालेज की लाइब्रेरी में बुक लिफ्टा होकर, प्राध्यापक बनकर यशभारती और पद्मश्री सम्मान प्राप्त कर उसने न केवल काशी का गौरव बढाया अपितु अपनी कालजमी कृतियों से हिन्दी साहित्य का भण्डार भर दिया। कविता, कहानी, नाटक और उपन्यास– प्रत्येक विधा में उसकी लेखनी ने सफलता के स्वर्णशिखर का स्पर्श किया। वह साहित्यकार है श्री हनुमान प्रसाद शर्मा जिसे लोग आदा से ’मनुशर्मा’ के नाम से अधिकतर जानते हैं।

मनुशर्मा ने भी नरेन्द्र कोहली की ही भाँति, अपितु उनसे बढ्कर ही महाभारत पर आश्रित हिन्दी उपन्यासों की लड्ी ही लगा दी। इन्होने महाभारत के पात्रों की आत्मकथा के रूप में पूरा महाभारत ही आधुनिक सन्दर्भैं के साथ प्रस्तुत का दिया है– उपन्यास कृष्ण की आत्मकथा आठ भागों में है जो शीर्षिक सहित इस प्रकार हैं– लासागृट, खाण्डवदाह, द्वारिका की स्थापना, नारद की भविष्यवाणी, प्रलय, दुरभिसन्धि, राजसूय यज्ञ और संघर्ष। ये आठों ही कृष्ण की आत्मकथा के अंश हैं और इनमें सम्पूर्ण महाभारत का कथ्य– तथ्य समाहित है। महाभारत के कुछ अन्य पात्रों तथा प्रसङ्गों के आश्रय से इनके द्वारा विरचित उपन्यास हैं– द्रोण की आत्मकथा, कर्णकी आत्मकथा, गान्धारी की आत्मकथा, द्रौपदी की आत्मकथा और अभिशप्त कथा।

द्रोण (द्रोणाचार्य), कर्ण (कुन्तीपुत्र अथवा सूतपुत्र अथवा राधेय), गान्धारी (महाराज धृतराष्ट्र की अनुगामिनि सहधर्मिणी महारानी) और द्रौपदी (पाञ्चाल नरेश द्रुपद की पुत्री, यज्ञसेनी, पाञ्चों पाण्डव की गृहिणी भार्या) को तो प्राय: सभी जानते हैं। ये सभी महभारत के प्रसिद्ध पात्र हैं। किन्तु, इसीक्रम मे मनुशर्मा जी द्वारा विरचित उपन्यास अभिशप्त कथा भी है। जिसके शीर्षिक से इसके कथानक का सहसा बोध नहीं हो पाता। यह उपन्यास भी महाभारत के कथासमुद्र से निकला हुआ है। अभिशप्त कथा नामक उपन्यास में वस्तुत: ‘कच– देवयानी’ की असफल प्रणय कथा है। कच– देवयानी का उपाख्यान महाभारत के आदिपर्व में घटित है। ‘कच’ देवगुरु बृहस्पति कापुत्र है जो देवों द्वारा प्रेषित होकर दानव गुरु शुक्राचार्य के चरणों में शिष्यत्व ग्रहण का ‘मृतसञ्जीविनी’ विध्या सीखने के लिए आया है। ‘देवयानी’ शुक्रचार्य की पुत्री है जो कच के रूप– यौवन पर मुग्ध होकर उससे प्यार काने लगती है। किन्तु कच उनके प्रणय को अस्वीकार का देता है अनुचित बनाकर क्यों कि वह गुरुपुत्री अत: भगिनी है। निराश और क्षुब्ध देवयानी अन्तत: कच को शाप दे देती है कि यह विध्या काम ना आयेगी। इस तरह कच भी प्रतीकार में देवयानी को अभिशाप देता है। मनुशर्म के उपन्यास अभिशापकथा की यही कथा है। मनुशर्मा ने भी नरेन्द्र कोहली के ही समान पुरानी नींद पर नवीन भव्य भवन का निर्माण किया है जिसमें ‘प्रख्यात’ भी है और ‘उत्पाध्य’ भी। इन उपन्यासों की पृष्ठभूमि को जानते के लिए पद्मश्री हनुमानप्रसाद

शर्मा मनुशर्मा का एक ही वाक्य पर्याप्त है– 'कृष्ण ने बरबस मुझे खींच लिया'– जो उन्होंने एक साक्षात्कार में कहा था[1]।

डॉ. युगेश्वर (२) ने भी सोलह उपन्यासों की सृष्टि की है। इनमें से पन्द्रह उपन्यास पौराणिक हैं और उनमें भी छः उपन्यास महाभारताश्रित हैं। देवव्रत, पार्थ, कृष्णा, दूसरा इन्द्र, दूसरा कृष्ण और हस्तिनापुर का शूद्र महामात्य– इन छः उपन्यासों की कथावस्तु महाभारत से गृहीत है। इन उपन्यासों में पौराणिक तत्व गौण हैं, मुख्य हैं राजनीतिक और सामाजिक तत्व। अपने औपन्यासिक लेखकी अनुचिन्तन से डॉ० युगेश्वर ने उन पौराणिक तत्वों की एक नई व्याख्यान की है।

हस्तिनापुर के राजकुल के एक सदस्य–विदुर– इन तीन अक्षरों के लिए उन्होने 'हस्तिनापुर का शूद्र महामात्य'– यह बड़ासा नाम दिया है। इसमें विदुर का पूरा इतिहास अन्तर्निहित है। सम्पूर्ण महाभारत में महात्मा विदुर का व्यक्तित्व विरल है। विदुर धर्म के अवतार हैं, स्वयं धर्म हैं । विदुर का नीति पथ वस्तुतः धर्म पथ ही है। वे दासी पुत्र हैं, शूद्र कोटि में है। फिर भी महाभारत हैं। वेसत्यवादी हैं, विवेकयुक्त है,वे कौरवों– पाण्डवों के चाचा है किन्तु क्षत्रिय नहीं हैं। वे कृष्ण के विकासपात्र हैं, भीष्म के अभिमत हैं और राज्यकार्य में राजा धृतराष्ट्र के तो साक्षात नेत्र ही है। वे इस उपन्यास की कथा के केन्द्र में हैं किन्तु उनकी कोई कथा नहीं है। बस, इतना जान लीजिए कि श्रीकृष्ण ने दुर्योधन का श्रम त्याग कर गृहस्थ महात्मा विदुर के घर शाक खाया था। विदुर महाभारत से निर्लिप्त है, निर्विकार हैं।

हिन्दी भाषा की एक पूरबी बोली है' भोजपुरी' । इसने भी अब साहित्यिक भाषा का स्थान प्राप्त कर लिया है। पं. चन्द्रशेखर मिश्र भोजपुरी के यशस्वी कवि रचनाकार हैं। इन्होंने भी महाभारत कथाश्रित दो काव्यों का प्रणयन किया है–'भीषम बाबा' और द्रौपदी। द्रौपदी काव्य की कथा चीरहरण के प्रसङ्ग से है। द्रौपदी सबसे निराशा हो कर अपनी लाज बचाने के लिए भाई कृष्ण की शरण में है। कृष्णा कृष्ण को पुकारती हुई उत्तरप्रदेश के ग्रामीण परिवेश में चले आ रहे भाई–बहन के सम्बन्धों की दुहाई देती है–

तू बहिनी–बहिनी कहबड, हम नात कबहै फेरि जोरब नहीं।
सावन में तोहे बान्है बदे, जरई फेरि ताल में बोख नाहीं।
पूस में लेइ खिचड़ी आइबड, गारी सडि जाये पै खोलब ना हीं।।'

भीष्म पितामह के त्याग और पौरुष का वर्णन करने वाला काव्य भीषम बाबा भक्ति और वीर रस का एक श्रेष्ठ काव्य है।।

॥ इति शुभं भूयात् ॥

सहायक ग्रन्थः

१ अन्धा युगः धर्मवीर भारती, किताब महल, १५ थार्न हिल रोड, इलहाबाद,१९९१।

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[1] 'साचविचार' (पत्रिका), अङ्क मार्च २०१६ई०, पृ०

[2] पूर्व आचार्य, हिन्दी विभाग, महात्मा गांधी काशी विध्यपीठ, वाराणसी (उ.प्र) ।

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GAMAKA VAACHANA : RAJASUYA YAGA IN SABHAPARVA

Vaachana : Smt. Vasuki Sharma, Vyakhyana : Smt. Shantha Gopal

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५. डां. सरदार सरबजीत सिंह, प्रवकता (संस्कृत), राजकीय कवींस कालेज, वाराणसी । ❑

ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳು

—ಡಾ. ಮೋಹನ ಕುಂಟಾರ್

ಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಾದ ರಾಮಾಯಾಣ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳ ಪುನರ್ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳು ಭಾರತದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿವೆ. ಲಿಖಿತ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಮೌಖಿಕ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಅನೇಕ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು. ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷೆಯೂ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರತಲ್ಲ. ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ ಅನೇಕ ಕವಿಗಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಉಜ್ಜೀವನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿಗಳಿಂದ ಮರುನಿರೂಪಣೆಗೊಂಡು ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿವೆ. ಆಧುನಿಕ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳಿಂದ ಕಾದಂಬರಿ, ಕಾವ್ಯ, ವಿಮರ್ಶೆಗಳ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಸ ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅನೇಕ ಬಗೆಯ ಹೊಸ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ದಾರಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದೆ.

ಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಾದ ರಾಮಾಯಣ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳ ಪುನರ್ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳು ಭಾರತದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿವೆ. ಲಿಖಿತ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಮೌಖಿಕ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಅನೇಕ ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗಳಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು. ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷೆಯೂ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರತಲ್ಲ. ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕೃತಿಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ ಅನೇಕ ಕವಿಗಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಹನ್ನೆರಡನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದಿಂದ ಎರಡು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಧಾರೆಗಳು ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ತಮಿಳು ಪ್ರಭಾವದ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿತವಾದ ಜಾನಪದ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಒಂದು. ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಮಿಶ್ರಿತವಾದ ‘ಮಣಿಪ್ರವಾಳ’ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು. ಇವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಂಡಿತ ವರ್ಗದ ಒಲವು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಸಾನ್ನಿಧ್ಯವುಳ್ಳ ಮಣಿಪ್ರವಾಳದ ಕಡೆಗಿತ್ತು. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ತಮಿಳು ಪ್ರಭಾವದ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಆಡುನುಡಿಯ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಲಿಖಿತ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂದುವರಿಯಲಿಲ್ಲ. ತಮಿಳು ಮಿಶ್ರಿತ ದೇಸಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನ ಸೊಗಡನ್ನು ಅಂತರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಳಗೊಂಡಿರುವ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಜಾನಪದ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪದ್ಯಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಅಥವಾ ಗಾನಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಇರುವುದನ್ನು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರಕಾರರು ಗುರುತಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ತಮಿಳು ಛಂದೋಬಂಧಗಳನ್ನೆ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಪಾಟ್ಟು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯವೇ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಂಪರೆ. ಇದುವರೆಗೆ ಲಭ್ಯವಾದ ಪಾಟ್ಟು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕೃತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಕೃತಿ 12ನೇ ಶತಮಾನದ ರಾಮಚರಿತ ಪಾಟ್ಟು. ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಮೌಖಿಕ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ರಚಿಸಿದ ಈ ಕೃತಿಯ ಕರ್ತೃ ಶ್ರೀ ವೀರರಾಮವರ್ಮ (ಕ್ರಿ.ಶ. 1195–1208) ಎಂದು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಗುರುತಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಜನಪದ ಮಟ್ಟಿನ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ಮಾದರಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಅನೇಕ ಕೃತಿಗಳು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿವೆ. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ‘ಭಾರತ ಗಾಥಾ’ ಅಥವಾ ‘ಮಹಾಭಾರತಂ ಪಾಟ್ಟ್’ ಎಂಬ ಕೃತಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಜಾನಪದ ಹಾಡಿನ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿದ ಕೃತಿಯಿದು.

14ನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಉತ್ತರಾರ್ಧ ಅಥವಾ 15ನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಪೂರ್ವಾರ್ಧದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶ ಕವಿಗಳೆಂದೇ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರಾದ ಮಾಧವ ಪಣಿಕ್ಕರ್, ಶಂಕರ ಪಣಿಕ್ಕರ್ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಮ ಪಣಿಕ್ಕರ್ ಒಂದೇ ಕುಟುಂಬಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇರಿದವರು. ‘ಕರುಣೇಶನ್’ ಎಂಬ ಕುಟುಂಬದ ಹಿರಿಯನಿಂದ ‘ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶನ್’ ಎಂದು ಆ ಕುಟುಂಬಕ್ಕೆ ಹೆಸರು ಬಂತೆಂದು ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ತಿರುವಾಂಕೂರಿನ ತಿರುವೆಲ್ಲಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ‘ನಿರಣಂ’ ಎಂಬುದು ಈ ಕವಿಗಳ ಜನ್ಮಸ್ಥಳ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಇವರನ್ನು ‘ನಿರಣಂ’ ಕವಿಗಳು ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದೂ ಇದೆ. ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶ ಕವಿಗಳು ಭಾರತ, ಭಾಗವತ, ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಗಳಿಗೆ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನವನ್ನು ಬರೆದು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರಾದವರು.

ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶ ಕವಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಎರಡನೆಯವನಾದ ಶಂಕರ ಪಣಿಕ್ಕರನ ‘ಭಾರತಮಾಲ’ ವ್ಯಾಸಭಾರತದ ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತಾನುವಾದ ಎಂದೇ ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮೂಲ ಆಶಯಕ್ಕೆ ಧಕ್ಕೆಯಾಗದಂತೆ ಔಚಿತ್ಯಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ 1364 ಸಾಲುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸಿರುವುದೇ ಇದರ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ. ಇದನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ರಚಿಸಿದ ಮೊದಲ ಉಪಲಬ್ಧ ಕೃತಿಯೆಂದೇ ಹೇಳಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕವಿ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆಯ, ಭಾಷಾಶೈಲಿಗಳ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯತೆಯಲ್ಲದೆ ಮೂಲ ಕತೆಗೆ ಹೊಸ ಬಗೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನವನ್ನೇನೂ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಜನ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರಿಗೂ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಸರಳವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಚಾರ ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಕೃತಿಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶ. ಮುಂದೆ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಂ ರಚನೆಗೆ ಮಾದರಿಯಾದ ಕೃತಿಯೆಂದು ವಿದ್ವತ್ ಲೋಕ ಭಾವಿಸಿದೆ. ಶಂಕರ ಪಣಿಕ್ಕರ್‌ನ ಭಾರತಮಾಲಾದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಹೃದಯ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ ಎಂದು ತೌಲನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿದವರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಿದೆ.

ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶ ಕವಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂರನೆಯವನಾದ ರಾಮಪಣಿಕ್ಕರ್ ಸಹ ‘ಭಾರತಂ’ ಎಂಬೊಂದು ಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದ ಸೊಗಸು ಹಾಗೂ ತತ್ವಚಿಂತನೆಯನ್ನು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಕೃತಿಗೆ ಮಹತ್ವವಿದೆ.

ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಣಿಪ್ರವಾಳ ಕವಿತೆಗಳ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಣ್ಣಶ್ಶ ಕವಿಗಳ ಕೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸ್ಥಾನವಿದೆ. ಈ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಕವಿಗಳು ರಾಮಾಯಣ, ಮಹಾಭಾರತ, ಭಾಗವತಗಳನ್ನು ಆಕರಗಳಾಗಿಸಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃತಿ ರಚನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವರೆಲ್ಲರನ್ನು ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಕವಿಗಳೆಂದೇ ಹೇಳಬಹುದು.

ಮಧ್ಯಕಾಲೀನ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಬಹುಮುಖ್ಯ ಕವಿ ತುಂಜತ್ತ್ ರಾಮಾನುಜನ್ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್. ಈತನ ಕಾಲದ ಬಗೆಗೆ ಖಚಿತವಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿದು ಬರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೇ ಕ್ರಿ.ಶ. 1425–1625ರ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈತ ಬದುಕಿ ಬಾಳಿದನೆಂಬುದು ಒಪ್ಪಿತ ವಿಚಾರ. ಈತ ಬರೆದ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮರಾಮಾಯಣ ಕಿಳಿಪ್ಪಾಟ್ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿದೆ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಈತನ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕೃತಿ 'ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ' ಕಿಳಿಪ್ಪಾಟ್. ಗಿಳಿಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಹೇಳಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಈತನ ಕೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಗಿಳಿಪ್ಪಾಟ್ (ಗಿಳಿ ಹಾಡು) ಎಂದು ಕರೆಯಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

> ಶ್ರೀಮಯವಾದ ರೂಪವನ್ನರಸುವ ಹೆಣ್ಗಿಳಿಯೇ
> ಸೀಮೆಯಿಲ್ಲದ ಸುಖವನು ನೀಡಬೇಕೆನಗೆ ನೀನು
> ಶ್ಯಾಮಲಕೋಮಲನಾದ ನಾರಾಯಣ
> ತಾವರೆಗಣ್ಣನ ಕತೆಯಕೇಳಲು ಬಯಸಿದೆ ನಾನು
> ಅತಿಶಯ ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದೆನ್ನೊಡನದನು
> ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳಬೇಕೆಂದು ನಾನು ನೆನೆದಾಗ
> ಕಾರಣನಾದ ಕರುಣಾನಿಧಿ ನಾರಾಯಣನ
> ಕಾರುಣ್ಯದಿಂದ ನಿನ್ನನ್ನು ಕಾಣಲು ಬಂದೆನೀಗ
> ಹಸಿವು ದಾಹಗಳ ಕಳೆದು ತಡಮಾಡದೆ ಹೇಳಬೇಕು
> ಮಾಯಾ ಸ್ವರೂಪಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕಥಾಮೃತವನು

ಹೀಗೆಂದು ಶುಕತರುಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿ ಕಾವ್ಯಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಬಿನ್ನವಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಮುಂದೆ ಪ್ರತೀ ಪರ್ವಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವಂತೆ ಕವಿ ಗಿಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಧ್ಯಕಾಲೀನ ಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿ ವೈಷ್ಣವ ಕವಿಗಳು ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಕಾವ್ಯರಾಧನೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಸಮೃದ್ಧಗೊಳಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ವಿವಿಧ ಜಾತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ ಜನವರ್ಗದ ಕವಿಗಳೂ ವೈಷ್ಣವ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳ ರಚನೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಪೋಷಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಭಕ್ತಿಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಂಪರೆಯು ಜನಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರೆಡೆಗೂ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದ್ದು ಈ ಯುಗದ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ. ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ ಜನಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಭಕ್ತರು ಹುಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡರು.

ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಕನಕದಾಸ, ಮರಾಠಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತುಕಾರಾಮ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇತರ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಕವಿಗಳ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡರು. ಆರ್ಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ದ್ರಾವಿಡ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ಜೋಡಿಸಿ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಸ ಧಾಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿದ ಕೀರ್ತಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನದು. ಶೂದ್ರಕವಿಯೊಬ್ಬ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಕಾವ್ಯ ರಚಿಸಿದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರ ವಿರೋಧವನ್ನು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಎದುರಿಸಬೇಕಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಶಕ್ತಿಯ ಮುಂದೆ ಅವೆಲ್ಲ ಗೌಣವಾದುವು. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಮೂಲತಃ ಭಕ್ತಕವಿ. ರಾಮಚರಿತದಿಂದಲೇ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಆವಿರ್ಭಾವವನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಬಹುದಾದರೂ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಅದು ಉತ್ತುಂಗ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ತಲುಪಿತು. ನೆಲದ ಭಾಷೆಯಾದ ಮಲಯಾಳವನ್ನು ಗ್ರಾಂಥಿಕ ಭಾಷೆಯಾದ ಪ್ರೌಢ ಮಣಿಪ್ರವಾಳ ಶೈಲಿಯ ನಡುವೆ ಸಮನ್ವಯದ ದಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾವ್ಯ ರಚನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಏಕಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಜನಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರನ್ನು ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಪಂಡಿತವರೇಣ್ಯರನ್ನೂ ತನ್ನೆಡೆಗೆ ಸೆಳೆದ. ಭಕ್ತಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮಿಕ ವಿಚಾರಗಳ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದನೆಗಾಗಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ಗೆ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮ ರಾಮಾಯಣವನ್ನು ಸಮರ್ಥವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡ. ಅದಲ್ಲದೆ ವಿಶಾಲವಾದ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ ಸಂಘರ್ಷಗಳ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಥಾಪಾತ್ರಗಳ ಬಾಹುಳ್ಯವಿರುವ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತವಾಗಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಮರುರೂಪಿಸುವುದು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ಗೆ ಒಂದು ಸವಾಲಿನ ಕೆಲಸವೇ ಆಗಿತ್ತು. ರಾಮಾಯಣಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಕ್ಯಾನುವಾಸ್ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ್ದು ಎಂಬುದು ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಇರುವ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು. ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ ಹಲವು ಸಂದರ್ಭ, ಘಟನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈವಾರಿಸುವಾಗಲೆಲ್ಲ ಒಬ್ಬ ಭಕ್ತನಿಗೂ ಮಿಗಿಲಾದ ಒಬ್ಬ ಕವಿಯನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದು. ಕತೆಯ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ರೂಪಕ್ಕೆ ಮಹತ್ವ ಕೊಟ್ಟಷ್ಟೆ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷೆಯನ್ನು ಪಳಗಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಲ್ಲಿಯೂ

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಒಂದು ಮಾಧ್ಯಮವಾಗಿ ಕವಿಗೆ ಒದಗಿದೆ. ಕಾವ್ಯಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತವನ್ನು ದೂರವಿಟ್ಟು ಮಲಯಾಳವನ್ನು ಸುಗಮವಾದ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಶೈಲಿಗೆ ಒಗ್ಗಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಈ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮಹತ್ವವಿದೆ.

ಇದೇ ಕವಿಯ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಮಲಯಾಳಿಗರ ಮನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರಾಯಣ ಮಾಡುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕವಾಗಿ ಮಹತ್ವ ಪಡೆದಿದೆ. ಜನಮಾನಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಮನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ರಾಮಾಯಣದ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆ ಕೇರಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ದೊರೆಯದಿರಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿ ಭಾಷೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಶೈಲಿಯ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸ್ಥಾನವಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಮನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರಾಯಣ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ಗೃಹಕಲಹಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬ ನಂಬಿಕೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ರಚನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೇರಳದ ಜನಮಾನಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಥಾನ ದೊರೆಯಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಶೈಕ್ಷಣಿಕ ವಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನ ಹೊಸ ಶೈಲಿಯನ್ನು ದಾಖಲಿಸಿದ ಕೃತಿ ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಗಮನಾರ್ಹವಾಗಿದೆ.

ಎರಡು ಲಕ್ಷದ ಹದಿನೈದು ಸಾವಿರದಷ್ಟು ಸಾಲುಗಳಿರುವ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಸುಮಾರು, ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ ಸಾಲುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಹದಿನೆಂಟು ಪರ್ವಗಳಿಗೆ ಬದಲಾಗಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತೊಂದು ಪರ್ವಗಳಾಗಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದ್ದು ವಿಶೇಷವೇ. ಆದಿಪರ್ವದ ಬದಲಿಗೆ ಪೌಲೋಮ, ಆಸ್ತಿಕ, ಸಂಭವಗಳೆಂದು ಮೂರು ಪರ್ವಗಳನ್ನು ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿ ಹೆಸರಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಸೌಪ್ತಿಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ತ್ರೀಪರ್ವಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಐಷೀಕಪರ್ವವೆಂಬ ಹೊಸಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ ಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ.ಅಶ್ವತ್ಥಾಮನು ವಿರೋಧಿಗಳಾದ ಭೀಮಾರ್ಜುನರನ್ನು ಕೊಲ್ಲಲು ಇಷೀಕವೆಂಬ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಸ್ತ್ರವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸಿದ ಕಥಾಭಾಗವನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಕ್ಕೆ ಐಷೀಕಪರ್ವವೆಂಬ ಅನ್ವರ್ಥ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ವ್ಯಾಸನಲ್ಲಿ ಸುದೀರ್ಘವಾಗಿರುವ ಜಯದ್ರಥ ಪ್ರಕರಣ, ಪಾಂಡವರ ಅಜ್ಞಾತವಾಸ, ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ದೌತ್ಯ, ದ್ರೋಣವಧೆ, ಕರ್ಣಾರ್ಜುನರ ಯುದ್ಧವೇ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಕಥಾಭಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಕವಿ ತುಂಬಾ ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅನೇಕ ಉಪಕತೆಗಳಿಗೂ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಜಾಗಕೊಟ್ಟಿಲ್ಲ.

ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯಂತಹ ತತ್ವ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳ ಭಾಗವನ್ನು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ತನ್ನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೈಬಿಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯ ಮಹತ್ವವನ್ನು ಕವಿ ಅರಿತಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಆದರೆ ತನ್ನ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ನಡೆಗೆ ಆ ಭಾಗ ತೊಡಕಾಗಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಉಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಯಬಹುದು. ಅಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯಂತಹ ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಕೃತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಬೇರೆ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಚಾರ ದೊರೆತಿದೆ. ವೇದ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಯಾದ ಅನೇಕ ವಿಚಾರಗಳೂ ಇರುವುದರಿಂದ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಬಿಟ್ಟಿರಬಹುದೆಂಬ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವೂ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರ ವಲಯದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣೇತರ ಕವಿಯಾದ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರನ್ನು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ ವಿಚಾರಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವುದರ ಮೂಲಕ ಅವರ ಭಾವನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಪಚಾರ ಮಾಡಬಾರದೆಂದು ಆತ ಭಾವಿಸಿರಬಹುದು ಎಂಬ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯವೂ ಇದೆ. ಆಗೆಲ್ಲ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಸಹ ಒಬ್ಬ ಸನ್ಯಾಸಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದನೆಂಬ ವಿಚಾರವನ್ನು ಈ ಬಗೆಯ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯ ಮಂಡಿಸುವವರು ಮರೆತು ಬಿಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ವಾಸ್ತವವಾಗಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ಗೆ ವೇದ, ವೇದಾಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆಗಾಧವಾದ ಜ್ಞಾನವೂ ಇತ್ತು. ವೇದಗಳಿಂದ ದೂರವೇ ಉಳಿದ ಬಹುಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಜನರಿಗೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವುದೇ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರು ಕವಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಆದರಣೀಯರೂ, ಪ್ರೀತಿಪಾತ್ರರೂ ಆಗಿದ್ದರು. ತನ್ನ ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿ, ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣರನ್ನು ಗೌರವದಿಂದ ವಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ವೇದಶಾಸ್ತ್ರ ಸಂಬಂಧಿತವಾದ ಭಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈ ಬಿಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಿಕವಾದ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಲಾತ್ಮಕವಾದ ಕಾರಣ ಮಾತ್ರವೇ ಆಗಿರಬಹುದು ಎಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಕವಿಗೆ ರಾಮಾಯಣಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ವಿವರಣೆಗಳಿಗೆ, ಪಾತ್ರ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಗೆ, ರಸಾವಿಷ್ಕಾರಗಳಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಅವಕಾಶ ದೊರೆತುದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ.

ರಾಮಾಯಣದಲ್ಲಿ ನೈತಿಕ ಆದರ್ಶಗಳನ್ನು ಎತ್ತಿ ಹಿಡಿಯುವ ಉನ್ನತ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳೇ ಇವೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ನಾಯಕನಾದ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನೂ ಆದರ್ಶ ಪುರುಷ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ರಾಮನನ್ನು ರಾಮ ದರ್ಶನವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತಾದ ಸ್ತುತಿಯ ಮೂಲಕವೇ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಧ್ವನಿ ವ್ಯಂಜಿಸಬೇಕು. ಸ್ಥಾಪಿತವಾದ ಆದರ್ಶಗಳ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಮಿತ ಆದರ್ಶಗಳ ನಿರ್ಬಂಧಗಳ ನಡುವೆಯೂ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ಅಭಿರುಚಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪ್ರಮುಖನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣವಾದುದು. ಮೂಲಭೂತವಾದ ಆದರ್ಶ ಹಾಗೂ ಸತ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಯೋಗಿಕ ಅಗತ್ಯಗಳಿಗನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ರಾಮಾಯಣದಲ್ಲಿರುವುದಕ್ಕಿಂತಲೂ ಅನೇಕ ಬಗೆಯ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವಗಳ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಅಗಾಧ ಕರುಣೆಯ, ವೀರ, ಧೀರ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಆ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ವ್ಯಾಸ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಿದ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಗುಣಗಾನವೇ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞೆ, ಘಟನಾ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯ, ಉತ್ಕಟವಾದ ಭಾವಗಳ ಹೃದ್ಯನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಇವುಗಳಿಂದೆಲ್ಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯವೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸುತ್ತಲೇ ಕೃತಿಯ ಮೂಲ ಸತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ನ್ಯಾಯ ಒದಗಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ ಕವಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್. ಆದರೆ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ರಾಮಾಯಣಕ್ಕೂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೂ ಇರುವ ಮೂಲಭೂತವಾದ ವ್ಯತ್ಯಾಸವನ್ನು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಗುರುತಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ರಾಮಾಯಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮನ ಕುರಿತಾದ ಕವಿಯ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಅಂತರಾಳದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾದಂತೆಯೇ ಗೋಚರಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕುರಿತಾದ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಕವಿಯಿಂದ ಸಹಜವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಏನೇ ಆದರೂ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಆತ್ಮ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಕತೆಯೇ ಎಂಬುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂದೇಹವಿಲ್ಲ.

ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಸಮಗ್ರವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಅದರ ಸಾರಸಂಗ್ರಹವನ್ನು ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಪರ್ವಗಳನ್ನು, ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳ ಸಾಲುಗಳನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸಿ 21 ಪರ್ವಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇರಳದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆಯ ಚಿತ್ರಣ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪುನರ್ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿದು. ಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿ ಬಿಟ್ಟ ಭಾಗಗಳಾದ ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯಂತಹ ವಿಚಾರಗಳ ಬಗೆಗೆ ಸಾರ ಸಂಗ್ರಹದ ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಮರ್ಶಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕತೆಯ ವೀರಕೃತ್ಯಗಳು, ಸ್ತ್ರೀ-ಪುರುಷ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವಗಳು, ನಡವಳಿಕೆಗಳು, ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳಿಂದಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ರಸಾವಿಷ್ಕಾರಗಳಿಗೆ ಆಸ್ಪದವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ತಿಳಿದ ವಿಷಯವೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಅನೇಕ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವೀರ ಕರುಣ ರಸಗಳು ಹೊಳೆಯಾಗಿ ಹರಿದಿವೆ. ಬಹುವಿಧದ ಸಿದ್ಧಿಸಾಧನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸಶಕ್ತ ಭಾವವಿಕಾಸಗಳುಳ್ಳ ಅಮಾನುಷ ಕಥಾಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಏಕಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಗೌರವಕ್ಕೂ ನಿಂದನೆಗಳಿಗೂ ಒಳಗಾಗುವಂತೆ ವೀರ ಕೃತ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದು. ವೀರ ಕೃತ್ಯಗಳ ಉದಾಸೀನ ಭಾವದಿಂದ ನೋಟಕನಾಗಿ ನಿಲ್ಲದೆ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಂತಹ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳು ಪುರುಷರನ್ನು ಶಕ್ತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಚೋದಿಸಿ ವೀರ ಪರಾಕ್ರಮಗಳತ್ತ ನೂಕಿ ಬಿಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ವೀರರು, ಹೇಡಿಗಳು, ತರುಣರು,ವೃದ್ಧರು, ಅಪರಾಧಿಗಳು, ನಿಷ್ಕಳಂಕಿತರು ಆಗಿರುವ ಮನುಷ್ಯರ ರಕ್ತದಿಂದ ನೆನೆದ ಮಣ್ಣು ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ್ದು. ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಯಂತಹ ತಾಯಂದಿರು, ಸಹೋದರಿಯರು, ಮಡದಿಯರು ಹೀಗೆ ಮೊದಲಾದವರ ಪ್ರಲಾಪಗಳು ಅಂತರಿಕ್ಷವನ್ನು ಹರಿದು ಚಿಂದಿಮಾಡುತ್ತವೆ. ಇವೆಲ್ಲವುಗಳ ನಡುವೆ ಮನುಷ್ಯನ ಆಸೆ ಆಕಾಂಕ್ಷೆಗಳು ಛಿದ್ರ ಛಿದ್ರವಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಪಾಂಡವರ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಆತ್ಯಂತಿಕವಾದ ನಿರರ್ಥಕತೆಯು ಪರಿಶುದ್ಧವಾದ ಕರುಣೆಗೆ ದಾರಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಘಟನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿ, ಗುರುವಾಗಿ, ಬಂಧುವಾಗಿ, ಸಾರಥಿಯಾಗಿ, ಕಾರಣ ಪುರುಷನಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ಕವಿ, ಭಕ್ತ, ದಾರ್ಶನಿಕ ಎಂಬೀ ನೆಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಪ್ರತಿಭಾ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ ವ್ಯಾಸನ ಅನಶ್ವರ ಕೃತಿಯ ಮರು ನಿರೂಪಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉದಾತ್ತ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನವು ಕಳೆದು ಹೋಗದಂತೆ ಮಾನವೀಯತೆಯು ನಷ್ಟವಾಗದಂತೆ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಉದ್ದೇಶವನ್ನು ಈಡೇರಿಸಲು ವರ್ಣನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ವಕ್ರೋಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಕವಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಶುಕ್ರಾಚಾರ್ಯ, ಕಚ, ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆ, ದೇವಯಾನಿ, ಯಯಾತಿ

ಮೊದಲಾದವರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಭಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಬಹುದು. ಕುರುವಂಶದ ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವಾಗ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಕತೆಯ ಮೂಲವನ್ನು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಬದಲಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲ. ತನ್ನ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾನವೀಯಗೊಳಿಸಲು ಮನಸ್ಸಿನ ಬಣ್ಣದ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಆತ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಜಯದ್ರಥನನ್ನು ಕೊಂದರೆ ತಂಗಿಗೆ ವೈಧವ್ಯ ಬರುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದು ಯುಧಿಷ್ಠಿರ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮೀಸೆಕುಣಿಸುತ್ತಾ ನಕ್ಕು ಭೀಮ ಅವನನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟುಬಿಡುವ ವಿಷಯ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿದೆ. ಕರ್ಣ ಕುಂತಿಯ ಮಗನೆಂಬ ರಹಸ್ಯವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸುವುದು, ಕರ್ಣನು ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸಿದ ಸರ್ಪಾಸ್ತ್ರವು ಬಂದು ಮರಳಿ ತೊಡುವಂತೆ ಕೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ವಿವರಗಳು ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಯುದ್ಧಾನಂತರ ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನ ಶೋಕವನ್ನು ಭೀಮನ ಸಂತೋಷವನ್ನೂ ವಿವರಿಸುವ ಒಂದೊಂದು ಅಧ್ಯಾಯಗಳು ಮೂಲದಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪಿಸಿದ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಅರ್ಜುನ ವಚನವನ್ನು ಕೈಬಿಟ್ಟು ಭೀಮವಚನವನ್ನು ಸೇರಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಇಂತಹ ಸಣ್ಣಪುಟ್ಟ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಕವಿ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಾಗಿ ಅಸುರ ಗುರುವಾದ ಶುಕ್ರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಮಗಳು ದೇವಯಾನಿ ಮತ್ತು ಅಸುರ ರಾಜನಾದ ವೃಷಪರ್ವನ ಮಗಳು ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆಗೆ ಪರಸ್ಪರ ಜಗಳವಾಯಿತು. ಒಮ್ಮೆ ಅವರು ಸಖಿಯರೊಡಗೂಡಿ ಉದ್ಯಾನದ ಬಳಿಯ ತೊರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ನಾನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಕಂಡ ಇಂದ್ರನು ಗಾಳಿಯರೂಪದಿಂದ ಬಂದು ಅವರು ದಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಚ್ಚಿಟ್ಟ ಬಟ್ಟೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾರಿಸಿದ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಗಾಬರಿಗೊಂಡ ತರುಣಿಯರು ಓಡೋಡಿ ಬಂದು ದಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿದ ವಸ್ತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಉಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡರು. ಈ ಅವಸರದಲ್ಲಿ ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆಗೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿದ್ದು ದೇವಯಾನಿಯ ವಸ್ತ್ರಗಳು. ಅದನ್ನು ಮರಳಿ ಕೊಡುವಂತೆ ದೇವಯಾನಿಯ ಕೋರಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆ ಮನ್ನಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದರ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಉಂಟಾದ ಮಾತು ಬೆಳೆದು ಹೊಡೆದಾಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊನೆಯಾಯಿತು. ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆ ಶುಕ್ರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಬಗೆಗೂ ಅವಹೇಳನ ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನಾಡಿದಳು. ದೇವಯಾನಿಯನ್ನು ಪಾಳುಬಾವಿಯೊಂದಕ್ಕೆ ನೂಕಿ ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಖಿಯರು ತಮ್ಮ ದಾರಿ ಹಿಡಿದು ನಡೆದರು. ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಆ ದಾರಿಯಾಗಿ ಬೇಟೆಗೆ ಬಂದ ಯಯಾತಿಯು ಆ ಪಾಳುಬಾವಿಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ತರುಣಿಯನ್ನು ಕಂಡನು. ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಕತೆ ಹೀಗಿದೆ: ಯಯಾತಿಯು ತರುಣಿ ಯಾರೆಂದು ವಿಚಾರಿಸಿದಾಗ ಆಕೆ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಕನ್ಯೆಯೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಯಿತು. ಆತ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಬಾವಿಯಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆತ್ತಿ ಕಾಪಾಡಿ ತನ್ನ ದಾರಿ ಹಿಡಿದುಹೋದ. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನು ಈ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನಂತೆ ವರ್ಣಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ಅಂದಲ್ಲವೇ ಯಯಾತಿಯು ಬಂದುದಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಬೇಟೆಗಾಗಿ
ಭೂಪತಿ ದಾಹದಿಂದ ನೀರನ್ನರಸುತ್ತಿರಲು
ಸಮೀಪ ನೀರಿಲ್ಲದ ಬಾವಿ ಕಂಡನದರಲಿ
ಶೋಭಿಸುವ ಮಿಂಚಿನಂದದ ಕನ್ಯಾರತ್ನವನು
ಕ್ಷೋಣೀಪಾಲಕನು ತಾ ಕಾಪಾಡಿದನು
ಕೋಪ ಅಸೂಯೆ ಪ್ರೀತಿ ವಿನಯ
ಭೂಪತಿಯಲಿ ಅನುರಾಗ ಬೆಳೆಯಲು
ಪ್ರೇಮಮ ಮಂದಾಕ್ಷವು ಬಾಷ್ಪವು ಪ್ರಲಾಪವು
ಕಾಮತಾಪವು ಕಮನೀಯವೇಷವು ಅಂತರಂಗದಲಿ
ಭಯವೂ ಮಾನಹಾನಿಯೂ ದುಃಖವೂ
ಕೂಡಿದೊಬ್ಬಳು ಕನ್ಯೆಯನು ಕಂಡು
ರಿಪುಕುಲಾಂತಕನಾದ ಅರಸ ನುಡಿದ:
ಚೆಂದುಟಿ ಚೆಲುವಿನ ಕುಲ ಮೌಲಿಕೆಯೇ! ಬಾಲೆ!
ನಿರ್ಮಲೇ! ನಿರುಪಮಶೀಲೇ! ಹೇಳೀಗ ಎನ್ನೊಡನೆ
ನಿನ್ನ ಮನೋದುಃಖದ ಮೂಲವನು ಮತ್ತೆ ನಿನ್ನ
ಕುಲ ಹೆಸರು ನಿನ್ನ ತಂದೆಯದಾರೆಂದು ಪರಮ
ಸತ್ಯವ ನುಡಿ ನಿನ್ನ ಹಡೆದವರಾರೆಂಬುದನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ
ಕೂಪದಲಿ ಬೀಳಲು ಕಾರಣವಾವುದು
ಭೂಪತಿ ಕೇಳಲು ಕನ್ಯೆ ತಾ ನುಡಿದಳು:

ಅಸುರಾಚಾರ್ಯನಾದ ಶುಕ್ರನ ಮಗಳು ನಾ
ಮಧುರಾಕಾರೆ! ದೇವಯಾನಿಯೆಂದೆನ್ನ ಹೆಸರು.
ಬಾವಿಯಲಿ ಬೀಳಲಿರುವ ಕಾರಣವನ್ನು ನುಡಿದಳಾಗ
ತಾಪಸ ಕುಲವರ ಬಾಲಿಕೆಯಾ ಸಮಯದಿ
ಮುಗುಳ್ನಗೆಯೊಡನೆ ಕೈ ಮುಗಿದು ಹೇಳಿದಳು:
ಕೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಪತಿತೆಯಾಗಿ ತಾಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಳೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದೆ
ನೆನ್ನಾಪತ್ತನ್ನು ಕಳೆದ ಮಾನುಷನಾದ ತಾನು
ಯಾರೆಂದರಿಯುವ ಆಸೆಯಿದೆ ಅಪಾರ
ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಭಿನ್ನಹವ ಕೇಳಿದರಸನು
ಮಂದಸ್ಮಿತನಾಗಿ ಕನ್ಯಾರತ್ನವಾದ
ಸುಂದರಿಯನು ಅಭಿನಂದಿಸಿ ನುಡಿದನಂದು:
ಅಹಿತಕುಲ ಕಾಲನಾದ ನರವೀರ
ನಹುಷನ ಮಗನಾದ ಯಯಾತಿ ನಾನು
ಅದಕೇಳಿದೊಡನೆ ನಿಟ್ಟುಸಿರಿನೊಡನೆ ಹೇಳಿದಳು:
ಚಂದ್ರಮುಖಿಯಾದೆನ್ನ ಕೈಪಿಡಿದಿರುದರಿಂದ
ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬ ಪುರುಷನು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಬಾರದು
(ಮಹಾಭಾರತ, ಸಂಭವಪರ್ವ, ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆಯ ದಾಸ್ಯ)

ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ದೇವಯಾನಿಯನ್ನು ಬಾವಿಯಿಂದ ರಕ್ಷಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೂ ಪೂರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಯಾತಿಯು ಆಕೆ ಯಾರೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ತಿಳಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆದರೆ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಯಯಾತಿ ಅವಳನ್ನು ಯಾರೆಂದು ವಿಚಾರಿಸದೆಯೇ ಬಾವಿಯಿಂದ ರಕ್ಷಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದು ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶವನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಾನವೀಯ ನೆಲೆಗೆ ತಂದಿಡುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದು ಮೂಲ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗಿದೆ: ಯಯಾತಿ ಮಹಾರಾಜ ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆ ಮತ್ತು ದೇವಯಾನಿಯನ್ನು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಭೇಟಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಿಂದೆ ಪಾಳುಬಾವಿಯಿಂದ ತನ್ನ ಕೈಹಿಡಿದು ಕಾಪಾಡಿದ ಘಟನೆಯನ್ನು ದೇವಯಾನಿ ನೆನಪಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಆತನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಕೆ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಮದುವೆಯಾಗುವಂತೆ ಬಿನ್ನವಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಆ ಘಟನೆಯ ನಂತರ ತಾನು ಅನ್ಯರನ್ನು ಮದುವೆಯಾಗುವುದು ಹೇಗೆಂದು ಆಕೆ ಪ್ರಶ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ ಕನ್ಯೆಯಾದರೂ ತನ್ನನ್ನು ಅಂಗೀಕರಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯನಾದ ಅರಸನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೋರುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ರೀತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಾನವೀಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಯಾವುದೇ ಜಾತಿ, ಧರ್ಮವೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ಗಣನೆಗೆ ತಾರದೆ ಕಷ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿರುವವರನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸುವ ತತ್‌ಕ್ಷಣದ ನಿಲುವಿನ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಯಯಾತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಾನವೀಯ ಅಂತಃಕರಣವುಳ್ಳವನಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಜಾತಿ ಧರ್ಮಗಳ ತಾರತಮ್ಯವಿರುವ ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಅತೀತವಾಗಿರುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವವೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಆದರಣೀಯವಾದುದೆಂದು ಕವಿ ನಂಬಿದಂತಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಕವಿ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ತುಂಬ ಮಾನವೀಯ ಅಂತಃಕರಣದ ಸಂಬಂಧಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ಫುರಿಸುವಂತೆ ಚಿತ್ರಿಸುವುದನ್ನು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಬಹುದು.

ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ವ್ಯಾಸಭಾರತದ ನೇರಾನುವಾದವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದವವಲ್ಲ, ಕವಿಯ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಿಸಿದೆ. ಕಾವ್ಯಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಇದರ ಕುರುಹುಗಳನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದು. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮನೊಡನೆ ವ್ಯಾಸರು ಹೇಳುವ ಮಾತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಸಾರಸಂಗ್ರಹದಲ್ಲಿ ವೇದಗಳನ್ನು, ವೇದರಹಸ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವ ಕವಿ ತನ್ನ ಕೃತಿ ಧರ್ಮಲೋಕವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತೇ ಆಗಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಒಬ್ಬ ಭಕ್ತಕವಿ, ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಿಗೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಿತವಾದ ಕವಿಮನಸ್ಸು ಆತನದು. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಗಿಳಿಯೊಡವೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕತೆ ಹಾಡಲು ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸಲು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿತು. ಪುರಾಣ ಕಾವ್ಯವೊಂದು ಬೆಟ್ಟು ಮಾಡುವ ಧರ್ಮಮಾರ್ಗದ ಪ್ರಾಮುಖ್ಯವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಲಕ್ಷಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಮೂಲಕ ಧರ್ಮ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಧರ್ಮಕ್ಷಯವಾಗುವಾಗಲೆಲ್ಲ ಅವತಾರಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಅದನ್ನು ಪುನಃ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಆತ್ಯಂತಿಕವಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕತೆಯೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಚಾರ ಹಾಗೂ ಜನಮಾನಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಥಾನ ದೊರೆಯಲು ಅದರಲ್ಲಿನ ಭಕ್ತಿಭಾವವೇ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಕಾರಣ. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಜನಾಕರ್ಷಣೆಯ ಮೂಲ ಸತ್ವವೇ ತೀವ್ರವಾದ ಭಕ್ತಿ

ಭಾವ ಎಂಬುದು ಸುಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ. ಧಾರ್ಮಿಕ ಪಂಥವೊಂದರ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಕೃತಿಗೆ ದೊರೆತ ಪ್ರಚಾರ, ಪ್ರೀತಿ ಮಧ್ಯಕಾಲೀನ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕೃತಿಗೆ ದೊರೆತಿಲ್ಲ. ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಕಾವ್ಯವೊಂದರ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಲಕ್ಷಣಗಳನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಎಂಬ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಸ್ಥಾನವಿದೆ.

ಭಕ್ತ ಕವಿಯಾದರೂ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಶೃಂಗಾರ ರಸ ವರ್ಣನೆಯಂತಹ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಹಿಂದುಳಿಯುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.ಪಾಂಡು ಕುಂತಿ ಮಾದ್ರಿಯರೊಡಗೂಡಿ ಅರಣ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಹರಿಸಿದ ವಿಲಾಸವನ್ನು ಕವಿ ವರ್ಣಿಸುವುದು ಹೀಗೆ:

> "ಎರಡು ಹೆಣ್ಣಾನೆಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮದಿಸಿದ ಕರಿವೀರನಂತೆ
> ತರುಣಿಯರೂ ಗಜಗಮನೆಯರೂ ಆದ
> ಕುಂತಿಮಾದ್ರಿಯರ ನಡುವೆ
> ಯುವಕನೂ ಮದೋನ್ಮತ್ತನೂ ಆದ ಪಾಂಡುವು
> ಬತ್ತಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಬೆನ್ನಿಗೆ ಬಿಗಿದು ಹೂಬಾಣಗಳನ್ನು ಹಿಡಿದು
> ನಿಂತಿದ್ದ ಮನ್ಮಥನಂತಿದ್ದ. ಅಂತಹ ಪಾಂಡುವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ
> ಮನ್ಮಥ ತನ್ನ ಹೂಬಾಣಗಳನ್ನು ರಭಸದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಿಸಿದ.
> ಕರಡಿ ಮಿಥುನಗಳು ಸರಸವಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ
> ಗಜ ಮಿಥುನಗಳು ಒಂದನ್ನೊಂದು ಹಿಂಬಾಲಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದ,
> ಗೂಳಿಗಳು ಹಸುಗಳನ್ನು ಅಟ್ಟಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದ.
> ಗಂಡು ಹಂದಿಗಳು ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಹಂದಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸರಸವಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ
> ಗಂಡು ಹಕ್ಕಿಗಳು ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಹಕ್ಕಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸಂತಸದಿಂದಿದ್ದ,
> ದೃಶ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತ ಪಾಂಡುವಿಗೆ ಚಿತ್ತ
> ಚಾಂಚಲ್ಯವುಂಟಾಯಿತು.
> ಕಾಮೋದ್ರಿಕ್ತನಾದ ಪಾಂಡುವಿನ ಕಿವಿಗೆ
> ಮಾವಿನ ಮಕರಂದವನ್ನು ಹೀರಿ ಕುಹುರವ
> ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಕೋಗಿಲೆಗಳ
> ಗಾನ ಆಗಾಗ ಕೇಳಿಬರುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಮಧುಪಾನ ಮಾಡಿದ
> ದುಂಬಿಗಳ ಗಾನವನ್ನೂ ಕೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಇವೆಲ್ಲವುಗಳಿಂದ
> ಉದ್ರಿಕ್ತನಾದ ಪಾಂಡು ಕುಂತಿಮಾದ್ರಿಯರನ್ನು
> ದೊಡ್ಡ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ತುದಿಯವರೆಗೂ ಹಿಂಬಾಲಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋದ
> ನಿರ್ಮಲ ಶಿಲಾತಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ಪತ್ನಿಯರೊಂದಿಗೆ
> ಸರಸಸಲ್ಲಾಪಕ್ಕಾರಂಭಿಸಿದ...."
> (ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ, ಪು. 72)

ಹೀಗೆ ಮುಂದುವರಿಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ತನ್ನ ಕಾವ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿ, ಕರುಣೆ, ವೀರರಸಗಳನ್ನು ಉತ್ಸಾಹದಿಂದ ವರ್ಣಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ಅನಾವರಣಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಸದುಪಯೋಗ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರ್ಥಸಾರಥಿಯಾದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ಕಂಡ ಭೀಷ್ಮಾಚಾರ್ಯರಿಂದ ಕವಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಹಾಡಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ:

> ಕಮಲದಳನಯನ ಮಧುಮಥನ ! ಕರುಣಾನಿಧಿಯೇ
> ಕಾಳಮೇಘಾಭಿರಾಮಕೃತೇ ಶ್ರೀಪತಿಯೇ
> ಜನನ ಮರಣ ಭಯಹರಣ ನಿಪುಣತರ ಚರಣಯುಗ್ಮ
> ಜಂತುಗಳ ಪ್ರಾಣನೆನಿಸಿದ ಜಗತ್ಪತಿಯೇ!
> ಸುಮಶರ ಶಮನಕರ ನಳಿನಭವ ನಮಿತಪದ
> ನಾರಾಯಣ ಹರೇ ನಾರಾಯಣ ಹರೆ
> ಸಲಿಲನಿಧಿತನುಜೆಯ ವರ ! ಸಕಲಜಗ ರಕ್ಷಕ ಕಾತರನೇ!
> ಸತ್‌ಚಿತ್‌ಸ್ವರೂಪ ! ಪ್ರಭೋ ನಾಥ ! ಗೋಪತಿಯೇ !
> ವೇದಾಗಮಮಯಸದನ ವಿಧುವದನ ಕರುಣಾನಿಧಿಯೇ!
> ನಿನ್ನ ಕೈಗಳಿಂದೆನ್ನ ಕೊಂದುಬಿಡು ನೀನು
> ನನ್ನ ಮನದ ನಿಯತಭಿಲಾಷೆಯಿದು ಮಾಧವ !

ಚಕ್ರಪಾಣಿಯಾದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ಭೀಷ್ಮಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಸ್ತುತಿಸುವುದು ಹೀಗೆ:

ಜಯ!ಪರಮ ಪುರುಷ!ಜಯ!ಜಯ!ಸಕಲ ಭುವನಮಯ
ಹುಟ್ಟು ಸಾವುಗಳಿಲ್ಲದ ಜಗತ್ಪ್ರಭೋ!
ಜಯ!ಕಮಲದಳ ನಯನ ಜಯ! ಕಮಲಭವ ಸದನ!
ಎಚ್ಚೆತ್ತವರಿಗೆ ಭ್ರಮೆಯ ಕೊಡುವ ಪ್ರಾಣಿ ಜೀವಾತ್ಮಕ!
ಜಯ!ಕಮಲಸದನ ಜಯ! ಜಯ! ವರದ ಕಮಲಕರ!
ಜಾಡ್ಯನಾಶನೆ! ತ್ರಾಹಿ ಮಾಂ ತ್ರಾಹಿ ಮಾಂ
ಜಯ! ವಿಬುಧ ಮುನಿ ನಮಿತ ಚರಣಸರಸಿರುಹ
ಜಾತ್ಯಭಿಮಾನಾದಿಹೀನ! ಪ್ರಭಾ ನಿಧಿಯೆ!
ಜಯ! ಸಕಲಾ! ಸಗುಣ ಜಯ! ಜಯ ವಿಗುಣ! ವಿಮಲ ! ಜಯ!
ಜಂತು ಧರ್ಮಪ್ರಿಯ! ಶ್ರೀಪತಿಯೇ! ಗೋಪತಿಯೇ!
ಜಯ! ಗಿರೀಶ ನಮಿತಪದ! ಜಯ! ಸಕಲತನುಭವನ!
ಜಂತುವೃಂದಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ! ವೇದ ವೇದಾಂತಗಮನ!
ಕ್ಷಿತಿ ವಿಬುಧಜನ ಹೃದಯ ನಿಲಯನೆ! ನಮೋಸ್ತುತೇ!
ಕೀರ್ತನ ಧ್ಯಾನಾತ್ಯಂತಿಕನೆ ದೇಹಿ ಮೇ! (ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಪರ್ವ)

ಹೀಗೆ ಸಾಗಿದೆ ಭೀಷ್ಮರ ಭಕ್ತಿ. ಹೀಗೆ ಕವಿ ಭಗವಂತನ ನಾಮಸ್ಮರಣೆಯ ಪದಗಳನ್ನು ಜೋಡಿಸುತ್ತಲೇ ಭಕ್ತಿರಸವನ್ನು ಹರಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಂತಹ ನಾಮಗಳನ್ನು ಪೋಣಿಸಿದ ಮೋಹನಮಾಲೆ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ತುಂಬಾ ಇವೆ.

ಕರ್ಣಪರ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರ್ಥ ಸಾರಥಿಯ ವಿಶ್ವಮೋಹಕವಾದ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವರ್ಣನೆ ಬೇರೊಂದು ಬಗೆಯದು:

"ಹೊಳೆ ಹೊಳೆಯುವ ನವಿಲುಗರಿಗಳನ್ನು
ಸಾಲು ಸಾಲಾಗಿ ಅಂದವಾಗಿ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು
ಮೇಘ ವರ್ಣದಂತಹ ಸೊಂಪಾದ
ತಲೆಗೂದಲಿನ ಮೇಲೆ ನವರತ್ನಖಚಿತವಾದ
ಕಿರೀಟವನ್ನು ಧರಿಸಿ, ಅಲೆ ಅಲೆಯಾಗಿ
ಹಾರಾಡುವ ಧೂಳಿ ಧೂಸರಿತವಾದ
ಮುಂಗುರುಳುಗಳಿಂದ ಬೆವರಿನ
ಹನಿಗಳಿಂದೊದ್ದೆಯಾದ ತಿಲಕದಿಂದ
ಈ ಲೋಕದ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಲಯಗಳಿಗೆ
ಕಾರಣವಾದ ಹುಬ್ಬುಗಳ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯದಿಂದ
ಕೂಡಿಯೂ.......
ನನ್ನ ಹೃದಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ
ಪಾದ ಪದ್ಮಗಳು ನೆಲೆಸಿರುವಂತೆಯೇ
ಆ ರಥವನ್ನು ಅಲಂಕರಿಸಿದ್ದನ್ನು ಕಂಡೆ
ವಿಜಯನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕ್ರೀಡಿಸುವುದನ್ನು
ನನ್ನ ಕಣ್ಣುಗಳು ಇನ್ನೂ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಕಾಲ
ನೋಡುವಂತಾಗಲಿ" (ಮಲಯಾಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ, ಪು. 69)

ಹೀಗೆ ಭಕ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತನ್ಮಯನಾಗಿ ವರ್ಣಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ.

ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಧುಗಳ ಶವಗಳನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ಗಾಂಧಾರಿ ದುಃಖಿಸುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭ ಹೃದಯವಿದ್ರಾವಕವಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಕೆ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಿನ ಶವವನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಧರಣಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿದ್ದೊರಗಿರುವನಲ್ಲ
ರಕ್ತದೋಕುಳಿಯಲಿ ಶಿವ ಶಿವಾ
ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ಮರಕತಮಣಿಯಂತೆ
ಮಂಗಳ ರೂಪನಾದ ಮನೋಹರ ಕುವರ
ಹೇಳು ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಸುಕುಮಾರ
ಗೋಪೀವಲ್ಲಭ ನಿನ್ನಳಿಯನನು
ಕೊಲ್ಲಿಸದೆ ಕಾಯಲಿಲ್ಲವೇಕೆ ನಿನಗೆ
ಕೊಲ್ಲಿಸುವುದೊಂದು ವಿನೋದವೇನು (ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ಪರ್ವ)

ಮುಂದೆ ತನ್ನ ಮಗನಾದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನ ಶವದ ಮುಂದೆ ಗಾಂಧಾರಿ ಬಿಕ್ಕಿ ಬಿಕ್ಕಿ ಅಳುತ್ತಾಳೆ.

ಕಂದಾ! ಮಗನೇ! ದುರ್ಯೋಧನಾ! ನಿನ್ನ
ಹೊನ್ನ ಕಿರೀಟವು, ಭೂಷಣಾದಿಗಳು
ದೇವತೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಸದೃಶವಾದ ಶೌರ್ಯ ಪ್ರತಾಪಗಳು

ಗಂಭೀರವಾದೊಂದು ಭಾವ ಭಂಗಿಗಳು
ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಕಳೆದೆಲ್ಲವನು
ಪ್ರೀತಿ ಪಾತ್ರರನು ತಂದೆಯನೂ
ತಕ್ಷಣ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ನಡೆದುದೆಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ನೀನು!
ಬಿರಿಯುತ್ತಿದೆಯೆನ್ನ ಮನ ಕಂಡಿದೆಲ್ಲವನು
ಹಂಸತೂಲಿಕಾತಲ್ಪದಲಿ ಪವಡಿಸುವ ನೀನು
ಸತ್ತೊರಗಿರುವೆಯಲ್ಲ ನೆತ್ತರಲಿ
ಕೋಪಾವೇಶದಿಂದ ಮಾರುತಿ ಘಾತಿಸಲು
ತೊಡೆ ಮುರಿದು ಬಿದ್ದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವೆಯಲ್ಲ
ಕಾಣಲಾಗದು ಎನಗಿದನೆಂದು
ದುಃಖದಿಂ ಹಲುಬಿ ಕುಸಿದು ಬಿದ್ದಳು
ಮೋಹಪರವಶಳಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಎಚ್ಚೆತ್ತು
ದುಃಖದಲಿ ದೃಢದಿ ನುಡಿದಳು
ಇಷ್ಟು ಕುಟಿಲತೆಯಿರುವೊಬ್ಬನನೂ
ಪೃಥ್ವಿಯಲಿ ಇದುವರೆಗೂ ನಾ ಕಂಡುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಕೇಶವಾ!
(ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ಪರ್ವ)

ಹೀಗೆ ಗಾಂಧಾರಿಯ ದುಃಖ ಕಟ್ಟೆಯೊಡೆದು ಹರಿಯುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮೂಲ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ, ದುಶ್ಯಾಸನ, ಕರ್ಣ ಮೊದಲಾದವರ ಶವಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದ ಬಳಿಕ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಿನ ಶವವನ್ನು ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ ಮೊದಲು ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ನಂತರ ಉಳಿದವರ ಶವವನ್ನು ಕಾಣುವಂತೆ ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ವೀರರಸ ವರ್ಣನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ಗಿರುವ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯ ಗಮನಾರ್ಹ. ಭೀಮನು ದುಶ್ಯಾಸನನನ್ನು ವಧಿಸುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭದ ರೌದ್ರರಸ ವರ್ಣನೆಯನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಬಹುದು.

> "ಭೀಮ ದುಶ್ಯಾಸನನ ಕಾಲುಗಳೆರಡನ್ನೂ ತುಳಿದು ಕೆಡಹಿ ಅವನ ಮೇಲೆ ಹತ್ತಿ ಕುಳಿತು ಅಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ದೇವತೆಗಳೂ ಮನುಷ್ಯರೂ ನೋಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆಯೇ ತನ್ನ ಖಡ್ಗವನ್ನೆತ್ತಿ ಅವನ ಎದೆಯನ್ನು ಸೀಳಿ ತನ್ನ ನಖಗಳಿಂದ ಅವನ ಎದೆಯ ಮೂಳೆಯನ್ನು ಪುಡಿ ಮಾಡಿದಾಗ ಪ್ರವಾಹದಂತೆ ಹರಿಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಕೆನ್ನೆತ್ತರನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಗರ್ಜಿಸುತ್ತ ಆ ಕಂಠ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಕುಡಿದು ಕರುಳುಗಳನ್ನು ಬಗೆದು ಹಾರವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಹಾಕಿಕೊಂಡು, ಭೂಮಿಯು ನಡುಗುವಂತೆ ಕುಣಿಕುಣಿದು ಧೂಳನ್ನೆಬ್ಬಿಸಿ, ಆಕಾಶವೆಲ್ಲ ಆ ಧೂಳಿನಿಂದ ಮುಸುಕುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿದ (ಮಲಯಾಳ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಚರಿತ್ರೆ, ಪು. 73)

ಈ ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ತಕ್ಷೋಭೆಯ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ನೆಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕವಿ ಆಧ್ಯಾತ್ಮಿಕ ವಿಚಾರವನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ವಿವರಿಸುವಾಗಲೂ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದಿಲ್ಲ.

"ದೇಹ ನಿಮಿತ್ತವಾಗಿ ಅಹಂಕಾರದಿಂದ ಮೋಹಪರವಶರಾಗಿ ವೃಥಾ ಹೀಗೆ ಭಾವಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ: ನಾನೊಬ್ಬ ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣ, ನಾನೊಬ್ಬ ಗಣ್ಯವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ, ನಾನೊಬ್ಬ ರಾಜ ಎಂದು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಸಂತೋಷದ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ದಿನ ಇದ್ದಕ್ಕಿಂತೆ ಕಾಲನಿಂದ ಭಕ್ಷಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಬೆಂದು ಬೂದಿಯಾಗಿ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಭೂಮಿಯೊಳಗೆ ಸೇರಿ ಕ್ರಿಮಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆದುದರಿಂದ ದೇಹಮೋಹ ಒಳ್ಳೆಯದಲ್ಲ."

ಈ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತತ್ವಚಿಂತನೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವಾಗಲೂ ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್ನ್‌ನ ವಾಗ್ವೈಭವವು ಸಹಜವಾದ ಭಾಷಾ ಪ್ರೌಢಿಮೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಶಕ್ತವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ.

ಹದಿನಾರನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಚಂಪೂ ಕವಿಗಳ ಪ್ರಾಬಲ್ಯವಿತ್ತು. ಈ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ರಚನೆಯಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಚಂಪೂ ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 'ಭಾರತ ಚಂಪೂ' ಕೂಡಾ ಒಂದು. ಪುನಂ, ನಂಬೂದಿರಿ ಕವಿಯದೆಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಲಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಚಂಪೂ ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ 'ಭಾರತ ಚಂಪೂ'ವನ್ನು ಸಹ ಸೇರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಗದ್ಯ ಪದ್ಯ ಮಿಶ್ರಿತವಾದ ಪ್ರೌಢ ಚಂಪೂ ಶೈಲಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ರಚಿತವಾದ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯವಿದು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಚಂಪೂ ಶೈಲಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದಂತಿದೆ.

ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ನಂತರ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತು ತತ್ವಚಿಂತನೆಯಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಧಾರೆಯೊಂದು ಪೂನ್ತಾನಂ ಎಂಬ ಕವಿಯಿಂದ ಆರಂಭವಾಯಿತು. ಎಳುತ್ತಚ್ಚನ್‌ನ ಭಕ್ತಿಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಮುಂದುವರಿಕೆಯಂತೆ ತೋರುವುದಾದರೂ ಪೂನ್ತಾನಂ ಕವಿಯ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷಾ 'ಕರ್ಣಾಮೃತಂ' ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ವೃತ್ತದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಒಂದು ಸ್ತೋತ್ರ ಗ್ರಂಥ. ಕರ್ಣನ ದುರಂತ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ಕಾವ್ಯ. ಆದರೆ ಕವಿಯ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ ನಿಜವಾಗಿ ಅನಾವರಣಗೊಂಡಿರುವುದು ದೇಶೀಯ ವೃತ್ತ ಹಾಗೂ ಭಕ್ತಿಗಾನಗಳ ರಚನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ.

ಈ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ರಚನೆಯಾದ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಚಂಪೂ, ಭಾರತ ಚಂಪೂ, ನೈಷಧ ಚಂಪೂ, ರಾವಣ ವಿಜಯಂ, ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿ ಸ್ವಯಂವರ, ಕಾಮದಹನಂ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಕೃತಿಗಳು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿವೆ. ಇವುಗಳ ಕರ್ತೃಯಾರೆಂದು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲ. ಕಲ್ಲಿಕೋಟೆಯ ಸಾಮೂದಿರಿ ಪಾಡನ(ಝೂಮೋರಿನ್ ಕ್ರಿ.ಶ. 1500) ಆಸ್ಥಾನ ಕವಿಗಳ ಒಬ್ಬನಾದ ಪುನಂ ನಂಬೂದಿರಿಯ ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿರಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕೆಲವು ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರು ಊಹಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

20ನೆಯ ಶತಮಾನದ ಆರಂಭದ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಮತ್ತೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಅನುವಾದಗಳು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿವೆ. ಕೊಡುಂಗಲ್ಲೂರ್ ಕುಂಜುಕುಟ್ಟನ್ ತಂಬುರಾನ್ ಎಂಬವರು 'ಭಾಷಾ ಭಾರತಂ' ಎಂಬ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ಯಾಸ ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ಣ ಶ್ಲೋಕಗಳ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಅನುವಾದವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವು ಎಂಟು ಸಂಪುಟಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿದ್ದು 1906ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲ ಮುದ್ರಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತು 1952ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮರಳಿ ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿದೆ.

'ವ್ಯಾಸ ಭಾರತಂ' ಎಂಬ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಅನುವಾದವನ್ನು ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಪ್ರಕಾಶ ಅವರು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. 1968ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲು ಮುದ್ರಣವಾಗಿದ್ದು ಇದೊಂದು ಗದ್ಯಾನುವಾದ ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈ ಹಿಂದಿನ 'ಮಹಾಭಾರತ' ಕೃತಿಗಳ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆ ಆಧುನಿಕ ಅನುವಾದಗಳಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲದಿರಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಮೂಲ ವ್ಯಾಸ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಯಥಾವತ್ತಾದ ಓದು ಮಲಯಾಳಿಗರಿಗೆ ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಲಭ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದಷ್ಟೆ ಹೇಳಬಹುದು.

ಕೆಲವೊಂದು ಕಾದಂಬರಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆ ಮರು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು. ಭಾರತವನ್ನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ನೋಡುವ ಪಿ.ಕೆ. ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣನ್ ಅವರ "ಇಾನ್‌ಇನಿ ಒರಜಟೆ" (ನಾನಿನ್ನು ನಿದ್ರಿಸುವೆ, ಕನ್ನಡ ಅನು: ಸಾರಾ ಅಬೂಬಕ್ಕರ್) ಪಾಂಡವರಲ್ಲಿ ಎರಡನೆಯವನಾದ ಭೀಮನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ನೋಡುವ ರಂಡಾಮುಟಂ(ಭೀಮಾಯಣ, ಕನ್ನಡ ಅನು: ಸಿ. ರಾಘವನ್) ಎಂಬಿತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನೆನಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದು. ಆಧುನಿಕ ಕವಿಗಳು 'ಕಾಳಿಯ ಮರ್ದನಂ' (ಸುಗತಕುಮಾರಿ), ಶ್ಯಾಮಮಾಧವ(ಪ್ರಭಾವರ್ಮ), ಕರ್ಣಭೂಷಣಂ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಕವಿತೆಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕುಟ್ಟಿಕೃಷ್ಣನ್ ಮಾರಾರ್ ಅವರ 'ಭಾರತ ಪರ್ಯಟನ' ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಎಡಪಂಥೀಯ ನೆಲೆಯಿಂದ ಪರಾಮರ್ಶಿಸಿದ ಕೃತಿ. ತುರವೂರು ವಿಶ್ವಂಭರನ್ ಅವರ 'ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಪರ್ಯಟನಂ' ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಆಧುನಿಕ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ ಕೃತಿ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಅನೇಕ ಕಥಕಳಿ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ – ಆಟ ಕಥಾಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ–ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಕತೆಗಳು ಮರು ನಿರೂಪಣೆಗೊಂಡಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಸಹ ಮರೆಯುವಂತಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧಾರವಾಗಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಬಕವಧಂ, ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಸೌಂಗಧಿಕಂ, ಕಿಮ್ಮೀರವಧಂ, ಕಾಲಕೇಯವಧಂ, ಕೀಚಕವಧಂ, ದುಶ್ಯಾಸನ ವಧಂ, ದುರ್ಯೋಧನ ವಧಂ ಮೊದಲಾದವುಗಳು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ಆಟಕಥಾ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕೃತಿಗಳು.ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಕವಿಗಳು ಕಾವ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ಸ್ತುತಿಸಿದರೆ ಆಟಕಥಾ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ರಚನಕಾರರು ಬಹುತೇಕ ಭೀಮನ ಪಾತ್ರ ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಕರಿಸಿದ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳನ್ನು ಆಯ್ದುಕೊಂಡಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಕಾಣಬಹುದು.

ಹೀಗೆ ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಚೀನ ಕಾಲದಿಂದ ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ ಆಧುನಿಕ ದಿನಗಳವರೆಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕತೆಗಳು ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲದ ಅಗತ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಬರಹಗಾರರು ಮರು ನಿರೂಪಣೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತಹಂತಹ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತದ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯವನ್ನು

ವಶೀಕರಿಸಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಿಗರಿಗೆ ಕೊಡುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶವಿರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ರಚನೆಗಳಾಗಿಯೇ ಇವು ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತವೆ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಭಕ್ತಿಯೊಂದು ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿ ಪೂಜನೀಯ ಕಾವ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆಯೇ ಹೊರತು ಮೂಲ ಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಸಮಕಾಲೀನ ರಾಜಕೀಯ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಹಿತಾಸಕ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಗುಣವಾಗಿ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಳಿಲ್ಲ. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಮೂಲ ವ್ಯಾಸನ ಕೃತಿಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಫೂರ್ತಿಯಾಗಿರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಕಥಾ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಪುನರ್‌ಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಎಂಬ ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಮರುರೂಪಿಸಿದವರು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅವರ ಮರುಸೃಷ್ಟಿ ಏನಿದ್ದರೂ ಬೃಹತ್ ಕಾವ್ಯವನ್ನು ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತವಾಗಿ ಸಾರರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಿಡಿದಿಡುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನದ ಭಾಗವಾಗಿಯೇ ಇದೆ. ಪಂಪ, ರನ್ನನೇ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಕನ್ನಡ ಕವಿಗಳ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರಾಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಗಳಂತೂ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಕವಿಗಳು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ ವ್ಯಾಸಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಪೂಜ್ಯಭಾವನೆಯಿಂದಲೇ ಕಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಆ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಮೂಲಕ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯವಾಗಿ ಹಲವರಿಂದ ಅಭಿವ್ಯಕ್ತಗೊಂಡಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಬಹುದು.

ಹೀಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವು ಮಲಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಉಜ್ಜೀವನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿಗಳಿಂದ ಮರುನಿರೂಪಣೆಗೊಂಡು ಪ್ರಕಟವಾಗಿವೆ. ಆಧುನಿಕ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಕೋನಗಳಿಂದ ಕಾದಂಬರಿ, ಕಾವ್ಯ, ವಿಮರ್ಶೆಗಳ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊಸ ಬಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಖಲಾಗಿದ್ದು ಅನೇಕ ಬಗೆಯ ಹೊಸ ಚಿಂತನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ದಾರಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದೆ.

BENGALURU
Message of Mahabharata
National Conf
June 26 - 30,

Shri Banwarilal Purohit, Governor of Tamil Nadu and Vice President BVB, Worldwide being felicitated by Shri K.G. Raghavan, Vice Chairman, BVB and Shri. N. Ramanuja, Chairman, BVB, Bengaluru while others join.

ಪರಾಮರ್ಶನ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳು

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2. **ಮೋಹನ ಕುಂಟಾರ್** (2018), ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಸಮಾಜ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ, ಯಾಜಿ ಪ್ರಕಾಶನ, ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆ.

ಮಲಯಾಳಂ ಕೃತಿಗಳು

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❑

the impact of mahabharata on english literature

—Dr. C. Naganna

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman the 19th century American philosophers have shown a lot of interest in the Indian lore, so much so that Emerson and Thoreau were called Boston Brahmins. the indological interest of the European have made "Mahabharata a living text". The scholars see Mahabharata as a resonating text reflecting the contemporary concerns in a convincing way.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman the 19th century American philosophers have shown a lot of interest in the Indian lore, so much so that Emerson and Thoreau were called Boston Brahmins.

But it is the German Indologist of the 19th century who really kindled interest on the Indian epics. Max Muller's scintillating statement that " Life seems too short to read such a gigantic poem as a whole" has placed Mahabharata on a lofty pedestial.

Schlegel wanted to pay particular attention to Shakuntala; but he ended up giving the German version of the Mahabharata, instead. Goethe is sure to have read this version. He was familiar with the English translation of Shakuntala by Monier Williams. Williams called the play " A Lost Ring". When he encountered Shakuntala repeatedly Goethe made this excited remark:

"Wouldst thou the blossom of spring
And the fruits that are later in season,
Wilt thou have charms and delights,
Wilt thou have strength and support,
Wilt thou with one short word
Encompass the earth and heaven
All is said if name only, Sakuntala, thee".

This tender bloom of native appealed to the European imagination so much that the French poet Gautier produced an opera on Sakuntala in Paris in 1858. We also hear of the scandinavian production, more or less at the same time. As T.S. Eliot made it abundantly clear in his disquisitions on criticism, we cannot treat English literature in isolation ; we need to place the English literature always within the context of European literary milieu. Therefore, the indological interest of the European have made "Mahabharata a living text". The scholars see Mahabharata as a resonating text reflecting the contemporary concerns in a convincing way.

Rethinking of India"s oral and classical epics is an ongoing project and the "cult of Draupadi" has caught the imagination of the western scholars so much that they have placed Draupadi at the centre and they have studied how the dalits claim that she belongs to them as she is a Goddess who saves them as a destructive force. Among the Indian scholars, Ram Manohar Lohia has treated very prominently Draupadi"s character to advance his theory about physical beauty and complexion. RamilaThapar, the distinguished historian has edited an influential volume called "Shakuntala: Texts & contexts" to delineate how the character of Shakuntala changes as India changes.

Before invoking the name of contemporary scholars in the fields of history and politics we have to pay attention to the poet"s per se. Sri Aurobindo wrote **"Savitri"** that incomparable epic and made Savitri represent the incarnation of the Divine Mother. This incarnation is supposed to have taken place in far post times when the whole thing had to be opened, so as to "lieu the ways of Immortality".(1936, "Letters on Savitri"). Aurobindo has sculpted Savitri as the Divine Creator. Savitri also etymologically means "some one descended from the Sun"; "an energy derived from the Sun, the Divine Creator".

The source of "Savitri," the epic is the Mahabharata lent the poetic genius of Sri Aurobindo has made it a symbolic journey of eternal quest. Aurobindo"s genius was saturated not only with English, Greek and latin poetry but it has dived deep into the earliest poetry of humanity, the Rig Veda.

How the veda is living poetry and how Sri Aurobindo makes it live again in his translations of the hymns of the Veda is well known to those who have seen his epoch-making researches in the realm of Vedic interpretation.

The beginning of "Savitri" aptly titled " The Symbol Dawn" is arresting in its sweep and grandeur:

It was the hour before the God"s awake:
Across the path of the divine Event
The huge foreboding mind of night, alone
In her unlit temple of eternity
Lay stretched immobile upon Silence"s marge:
Almost one felt, opaque, impenetrable
In the sombre symbol of her eyeless muse
The abysm of the unbodied Infinite;
A fathomless zero occupied the world.

This is how the song begins which takes the greatest flight that has revealed from the highest pinnacle and the longest field of vision the destiny of the human spirit, and the purpose of the Divinity in man and the universe: The splendor and richness of the epic "Savitri" declare in certain terms that steeped in the Mahabharata, Aurobindo has achieved in the domain of poetry a feat that is both unrivalled and unrepeatable. My wings are too fragile and puny to take a flight in the rarefied world of "Savitri" and therefore I will make a reference to a short poem of Sri Aurobindo titled "The Cosmic Dance" which has a subtitle: " Dance of Krishna, Dance of Kali". It begins thus:

Two measurers are these of the cosmic dance.

Always we hear the tread of Kali"s feet
Measuring in rhythms of pain and grief and chance
Life"s game of hazard terrible and sweet:

The poem of three stanzas talks about "Death"s embrace" "dreaded gymnasium of Fate", Man"s mysterious sorrows", " Time"s wastes of dream", " souls tragic theme", etc: But the poem ends with a couplet.

But when shall Krishna"s through Nature move, His mask of sweetness, laughter, rapture love?

Krishna's name is an antidote to all earthly sorrows and that is the sure way of traversing "truth's narrow road".

Toru Dutt who was born on 4th March 1856 did not live to celebrate her 30th birthday. She died very young. Her family embraced Christianity when she was 6 years old. After the death of her sister, the family returned to Calcutta and Toru turned to Sanskrit- the Mother of Muses, the deep springs of the India's racial memory. Now Toru could feel her feet on hospitable soil, and satisfy the secret longings of her spirit for roots in the consciousness of the race.

The Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Vishnu Purana, and the Bhagavata gave her woman's imagination free play, and she could re-enact the ancient stories of star-crossed men and women and deathless heroes and heroines. Her

Christian faith does't conflict with her attraction or addiction to the "deep magics" of the Hindu epics.

The story of Jada Bharata in Vishnu Purana attracted her. She chose such topics on Savitri, Lakshaman and Sita for her poems. Dhruva is very much there in her scheme of things as he was denied a father"s love because of a dominant step-mother; eventually, he seeks the love of the Father of all the Worlds. Ekalavya is the theme of another poem. Prahlad the devotee of Vishnu and the demon Hiranya Kashyapu"s son demonstrates God"s omnipresence and omnipotence. Toru is seeking in these deathless stories the right material for the expression of her own maturing poetic powers.

In the story of "Savitri" this is how Toru describes the advancing Yama, the God of Death:

She saw a stranger slowly glide
Beneath the boughs that shrunk aghast.
Upon his head he wore a crown
That shimmered in the doubtful light,
His vestment scarlet reached low down,
His waist, a golden girdle dight
His skin was dark as bronze; his face
Irradiate, and yet severe,
His eyes had much of love and grace,
But glowed so bright, they filled with fear.

"Prahlad" episode is intense and dramatic as the situation demands. The Demon Father kicks the pillar and out comes the Lord as the Man-Lion(Narasimha). Toru Dutt describes the confrontation thus:

" I fear not fire, I fear not sword,
All dangers, father, I can dare;
Alone, I can confront a horde,
Fear oh! My God is everywhere!"

" What! Everywhere? Then in this hall,
And in this crystal pillar bright?....."

" yes, father, God is even here,
And if he choose this very hour
Can strike us dead, with ghastly fear
And indicate His name and power".

It is difficult to give the mystic action of the Bhagavata the recognisible local colour; but with the childhood faith of unalloyed innocence Toru has almost accomplished it.

Another illustrious Bengali writer of the 19th century, Ramesh Chander Dutt rendered into English both the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, besides selections from Rig Veda, the Upanishads, Buddhist literature, Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava and Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya. He reduced the 48000 lines of the Ramayana and the 2,00,000 lines of the Mahabharata into 4000 lines each. Obviously he has omitted many episodes. Again Ramesh Chander Dutt has dealt with the Savitri episode and the episode has suffered because of the constraint space. In his preface he has said very succinctly about the character of the Mahabharata.

" the characters of the Mahabharata are character of flesh and blood, with the virtues and crimes of great actors in the historic world; the characters of the Ramayana are more often the ideals of manly devotion to truth, and of womanly faithfulness and love in

domestic life". Ramesh Chander took up the Mahabharata for translation because it is not at all an old story with no contemporary relevance: actually, this sort of thing could happen today.
K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, the literary historian says that "Every modern war is a Mahabharata re-enacted with new names and new places.

The Mahabharata has scenes of naked ferocity and sublime beauty. Karna and Kunti episode is depicted by Romesh Chander capturing the tragedy and the irony of the situation: After learning that Kunti had disclosed Karna"s origin to him, Yudhishthir utters these words in almost a matchless soliloquy.

> *"Monarch's empire, victor"s glory, all the treasures*
> *earth can yield,*
> *Righteous bliss and heavenly gladness, harvest of the*
> *heavenly field,*
> *All that wish can shape and utter, all that nourish*
> *hope and pride,*
> *All were ours, O noble Karna, had't thou rested*
> *by our side,*
> *And thus carnage of the Kuru"s these sad*
> *eyes had never seen,*
> *Peace had graced our blessed empire,*
> *happy would the earth have been !"*

Tagore has also written a play called **Karna** and **Kunti** in which the mother and son try to salvage what even at this late hour is possible from the general wreckage, Karna"s concluding words show his humanity and magnanimity-

> *"Mother, have no fear! I know for certain that victory awaits the Pandavas. Peaceful and still though this might be, my heart is full of the music of a hopeless venture and baffled end. Ask me not to leave those who are doomed to defeat. Let the Pandavas win the throne, since they must: I remain with the desperate and forlorn. On the night of my birth, you left naked and unnamed to disgrace: leave me once again without pity to the calm expectation of defeat and death!*

Actually before Karna and Kunti, Tagore had written Chitra and Gandhari"s prayer. He was very much within the groove of Mahabharatha story. For instance, in the course of a perceptive introduction to an English version of Shakuntala ,Tagore wrote-

> *"In truth there are two unions in Sakuntala, and the motif of the play is the progress from the earlier union of the first Act, with its earthly unstable beauty and romance, to the higher union in the heavenly hermitage of eternal bliss described in the last Act...Translating the whole subject from one world to another- to elevate love from the sphere of physical beauty to the eternal heavens of moral beauty".*

Tagore's play **" Chitra"** is the quintessence of romance: The speeches oscillate between truth and illusion. Arjuna says, vaguely glimpsing the truth but greatly confused still-

> *"I never seem to know you right------*
> *Illusion is the first appearance of truth,*
> *She advances towards her lover in disguise.*
> *But a time comes when she throws of her*

garments and veils and stands clothed in
naked dignity. I grope for that ultimate you,
that bare simplicity of truth.

Tagore has traced the evolution of human love from the physical to the spiritual in "Chitra". As Dr. Iyengar has pointed out " Tagore rejected both the ascetic's denial of life as well as the sensualist"s denial of the spirit.The blinding maddening ecstasy of the physical union is not denied in "Chitra" but its transcience is also recognized.

Gandhari"s prayer is a study of a mother and her son, the great and magnanimous mother of the Kurus, and her eldest ill-fated son, Duryodhana. Though Dhritarastra knows that Duryodhana is wrong and compromises. Gandhari will not. She has a clear vision of the doom to come and she speaks as the Mother of sorrows-

> *Woman, bow your head down to the dust! And as a sacrifice fling your heart under those wheels! Darkness will shroud the sky, earth will tremble, wailing will send the air- then comes the silent and cruel end- that terrible peace, that great forgetting, and awful extinction of hatred- the supreme deliverance rising from the fire of death."*

We can never bypass that Nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu, who gave expression to some of the finest themes of India. " Song of Radha, the Milkmaid" and "the Flute-player of Brindavan" depict the delicate love only a soul that is lured away from mortal cares and attachments is capable of reaching. For instance, we find this delicious wearing of words in "Song of Radha the Milkmaid"

" I carried my curds to the Mathura fair...
How softly the heifers were lowing...
I wanted to cry, "Who will buy
There curds that are white as the clouds in the sky
When the breezes of shrawan are blowing"

"The Flute- Player of Brindavan" can be termed as a twin poem because of its thematic affinity.

The love- lorn maid asks:

Why didst thou play thy matchless flute
Neath the Kadamba tree,
And wound my idly dreaming heart
With poignant melody,
So where thou goes I must go
My flute- player, with thee?

She is prepared to follow the flute- player wherever he goes, because she has had enough of this earthly love and worldly lures and therefore she would answer his magical flute-call.

Karna and Kunti episode in the Mahabharata is allowing that Sarojini Naidu has also written a short prose piece by that name

Karna: I am Karna, the son of the charioteer Adhiratha, and I sit here by the bank of holy Ganges to worship the setting sun. Tell me who you are:

Kunti: I am the woman who first made you acquainted with that light you are worshipping.

Karna: I do not understand: but your eyes melt my heart as the kiss of the morning sun melts the snow on a mountain-top, and your voice rouses a blind sadness within me of which the cause may well lie beyond the reach of my earliest memory. Tell me, strange woman, What mystery binds my birth to you?

Kunti: Patience, my son. I will answer when the lids of darkness come down over the prying eyes of day. In the meanwhile, know that I am Kunti.

This dialogue stretches over some five pages and at the end, Karna assures Kunti that the Pandavas would emerge victorious in the battle.

Mr. Mikhan Lal Sen has written the life and teachings of Lord Sreekrishna in three volumes. Volume I deals with Brindavana Leela. Volume II Mathura and Dwaraka Leela and volume III with "Kurukshetra and Prabhas" Leela. I could lay my hands on only "Brindavana Leela". The another quotes Lord Morley's words who has written the Life of William Ewart Gladstone.

"I am well aware that to try to write Mr. Gladstone's Life- the life of a man who held an imposing place in many high national transactions, whose character and career may be regarded in such various lights, whose interests were so manifold and whose years bridged so long a span of time- is a stroke of temerity. To try to write his life today is to push temerity still further."

After quoting Morley Mr. Makhan Lal Sen says;

> *"If this be an act of rashness, how far more audacious and impertinent must be the attempt to write the life style of Him- the broad outlines of whole life have been lost in the rich colorings of the past, and whose traditions and teachings still loom over the destiny of India and her teeming millions? Let us frankly admit at the very outset that we do not consider ourselves competent enough to do justice to the great theme undertaken in the present treatise. We, therefore, respectfully ask our readers to forgive us for our shortcomings and errors which are apt to occur from our very limitation in both scholarship and literary expressions. In fact, there is hardly any justification for our ambitious pretensions. So saying the author quotes Wordsworth who has depicted the humble earthly flowers giving out their fragrance which moves upwards. But the Heaven will not call it their forwardness. Similarly, ambition in mortals is excusable.*

With this short preamble Mr. Mākhan Lal Sen has portrayed the picture of Krishna in the first volume **"Brindavan Leela."** Here is the chapter called "Radha". Sreekrishna addresses Radha:

> *"Wherever thou art, there I am, there is no difference between you and me. As whiteness in milk, as burning energy in fire, as smell in the earth, so I am ever present in thee. The potter cannot make a pitcher without clay; the goldsmith cannot make ear-rings without gold; likewise, I can not create anything without you. Thou art the cosmic principle of creation, and I am the prime cause of the seed. When I am without you people call me 'Krishna', and when I am with you, they call me Sreekrishna".*

I hope to get the remaining two volume to achieve immersion which should be the aim of literary studies beyond the reach of 'disbelief'. Both Rajaji and R.K. Narayan have written Mahabharata. Rajaji is of the firm opinion that the persons and the incidents portrayed in the great literature of a people influence national character no less potently than the actual heroes and events enshrined in its history. Rajaji further says; "Don Quixote, Gulliver, Pickwick, Sam Weller, Sir Roger de Couerley, Falstaff, Shylock, King Arthur, Sir Lancelot, Alice and her wonderings in Wonderland, all these and many such other creations of genius are not less real in the minds of the British people than the men and women who lived and died and he buried in British soil."

Rajaji has written about the Ramayana and the Mahabharata because people have largely been exposed to the garish fancies of the Kalakshepam where it is difficult to retain the dignity and approach to truth of Vyasa or Valmiki.

According to Rajaji "Vyasa's Mahabharata is one of our noblest heritages, and it is my cherished belief that to hear it faithfully told is love it and come under its elevating influence. Rajaji also hoped that "the reading of these stories might enliven village evenings, when rustics gather socially in the chavadi or temple after a day's work is done".

We know how far me and our village rustics have traversed in a direction Rajaji had never imagined.

C.V.SrinivasaRao has given us an abridged version of Mahabharata in which he has concentrated his attention on Vana Parva, Virata Parva, and Udyoga Parva. Because few people have patience or the time to read the Sanskrit text or the translation in full he has given us the abridged version. The author has been very modest and unassuming. He says, "I am endeavouring to place the story before the average reader on a smaller canvas, but sufficiently large to admit the portrayed in some detail, in the poet's own words and according to his plan, of as much as possible of this unique epic.

The author has accomplished task to the best of his ability and all the three parvas have been covered with a sense of purpose. The last person to borrow this wonderful book from the Mysore University library did so way back in 1989.

Coming to the recent works of importance which have caught the attention of the reading public because of their approach and in depth study of the Mahabharata, we encounter Irawati Karve's epoch-making book **"Yuganta"** which she wrote originally in Marathi and subsequently it is made available in English translation. Irawati Karve is a trained sociologist and Anthropologist and as such her work happens to be a study of characters and society in the Mahabharata. Here, the mythical- heroic figures of the Mahabharata have been studied from historical, anthropological and secular perspectives. The usually venerated character of the epic are fears, and imbues them with wholly human motives, thereby making their stories astonishingly relevant to contemporary readers. These essays by Irawati Karve are scientific in spirit, yet appreciative of the literary tradition of the Mahabharata. She challenges the familiar and formulates refreshingly new interpretations, all the while refusing to judge harshly or venerate blindly.

The author in her preface has explained how she came to provide the English version of the work "Yuganta".

"The idea of writing my Mahabharata studies in English occurred to me when friends and pupils in the U.S.A. showed an interest in the subject. The venture at last has been completed thanks to my American and Indian daughters, Maxine, jai, and Gowri."Actually, the English version, according to the critics, is not a literal translation of the Marathi original, but has been rewritten whenever necessary. Explanatory parentheses and footnotes were added to the text; appendices provided mainly for the reader abroad; the introduction enlarged to include a summary of the epic narrative and other descriptive comments.

Finally, Professor N. Norman Brown of the University of Pennsylvania wrote a foreword which introduced the subject and the author to the foreign reader.

Karve's robustly pragmatic approach discusses themes and personalities in ten essays and asks why certain acts are in characters and others not. Karve is of the opinion that "The Mahabharata is a record of human beings with human weakness. The entire Ramayana, on the other hand, is in pains of an ideal man. Mahabharata shows how women also like Draupadi. Brhadasva tells the story of Nala and Damayanti in response to Yudhishtira's question whether there is a more unlucky king on earth than he, having lost the dice game.

Markandeya tells the story of Rāma Dāsārathi to console Yudhishthira for Draupadi's abduction, although admittedly he next tells the story of Savitri in response to Yudhishthira's question.

Iravati ends her series of characters with Krishna. The author's presentation of the message of Bhagavadgita is too brief. She is clearly antipathetic to bhakti. Without sympathy with bhakthi the development of the Mahabharata cannot be fully understood. She compares Mahabharata with ancient Greek epic Iliad and points out some significant differences too. It reflects her evidence based, balanced approach.

Irawati Karve expressing regret at the younger generation's lack of acquaintance with the text, comments at the end of her preface "I shall consider it a victory if they think that my interpretation is wrong and read the Mahabharata merely to prove it wrong". Writing an introduction to the book John Brockington, Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Edinburgh and secretary general of the International Association of Sanskrit studies, has said, "I urge you to join Irawati Karve in this voyage of discovery, first in her book and then in the Mahabharata".

Very many scholars, including Irawati Karve, are of the opinion that the Mahabharata is an inexhaustible mine. These are various ways of making it yield its riches. No one person can encompass it entirely. Everyone sees part of this cultural wealth according to his own ability.

Beginning with Gandhari, the author moves on to Kunti, Draupadi, Karna, and Krishna Vasudeva. Of course Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana figure centrally in the chapter "Father and Son?."

Discussing "the End of a Yuga" The author says, "Each character in the Mahabharata was aware of the framework of normal values and when faced with a choice, chose according to his or her own lights". In the last thirty years, western literature reflect a mood of questioning. They question the value and meaning of human existence and express despair at its futility" Karve's observation needs to be quoted in full as it connects Mahabharata to the happenings of today. She says "one feels that this death and revulsion is the effect of the agonies over the death and loss of empires and their glories.

More real and poignant is the realization of the emptiness of human success felt by Dharma and Arjuna.

At the moment of victory, Dharma said, "This victory seems to me as defeat."

The non- attachment described by Krishna regarding the world was not of the same kind as that of the "Stranger" or "Outsider" one meets in modern literature.

Krishna says that since it is not possible to remain a mere "Witness" and not to be involved in any action, it is better to act with complete self-knowledge and with the results of the action in view.

This reminds us the chorus in T.S. Eliot's play "Murder in the Cathedral". Chorus is nothing but a group of leaderless women of Canterbury calling for spiritual guidance in their half-lived lives ("Living and partly living"). They too inhabit the gloomy cycles of time; death-bring winter, ruinous spring, disastrous summer and barren autumn make sombre their opening lament. But they cannot remain for long away from action, because the wheel turns and the turning wheel sucks everyone into its vortex. No one is a mere bystander in this world which necessitates action.

They know and do not know, what it is to act or suffer
They know and do not know, that action is suffering
And suffering action, Nor does the agent suffer
Nor the patient act. But both are fixed
In an eternal action, an eternal patience
To which all must consent that it may be willed
And which all must suffer that they may will it
That the pattern may submit, for the pattern
is the action
And the suffering, that the wheel may turn and still
Be forever still.

Eliot is trying to understand things from the Christian point of view; but he knew his Mahabharata and the Sanskrit classics very well. The still centre he is in referring to in his play "Murder in the Cathedral" is pointing in the direction of Krishna, because if one tries to locate a still centre in the relentless turbulence and turmoil of the world in the Mahabharata, it ought to be Krishna. The Christian tenets further says "We must neither act nor suffer for our own advantage, but diverted of the love of created beings unite a will made perfect with the will of God, to sustain the design and pattern of perfection, to which we are called".

In the Mahabharata, the wheel of life turns at a certain speed in one direction. The direction cannot change nor can the movement of the wheel be halted.

Men, women, kings, beggars, even Gods cannot be liberated from the course of fate. They all have to see sorrow, hardship and ruin along with happiness, well-being and success.

Bhishma could not escape this, nor could Dharma, nor Krishna himself.

The Mahabharata is a history and while recounting what was, it also portrays the hopes, struggles, ambitious and despairs of characters. But all emotion and strife are at a human level.

Critics believe that there is no scope in such a story for a contrived happy ending.There was no God who could fulfill all human desires.

Eliot has placed the Bhagavadgita at the centre in his "Four Quartets" in the section "The Dry Salvages". The third segment of this section begins with:

I sometimes wonder if that is what Krishna meant-Among other things- or one way of putting the same thing: That the future is a faded song, a Royal Rose or a lavender spray.

Of wistful regret for those who are not yet here to regret, The segment ends like this:

> *"Fare forward, you who think that you are voyaging:*
> *While time is withdrawn, consider the future*
> *And the past with an equal mind.*
> *At the moment which is not of action or inaction*
> *You can receive this: "On whatever sphere of being*
> *The mind of a man may be intent*
> *(At the time of death is every moment)*
> *Which shall fructify in the lives of others:*
> *And do not think if the fruit of action.*
> *Fare forward.*
>
> O *voyagers, O seamen,*
> *You who come to port, and you whose bodies*
> *Will upper the trial and judgement of the sea*
> *Or whatever event, this is your real destination".*
> *So Krishna, as when he admonished Arjuna*
> *On the field of battle.*
> *Not fare well,*
> But fare forward, voyagers.

The philosophy of the Bhagavadgita comes handy to the modern poet who wants to grasp the complexity and the inescapable contingency of the modern man who has a dilemma of facing farewell or fare forward.

> *God and man alike were yoked to an inevitable fate which none could escape.*
>
> *The ancients daily prayed to the Sun, "Keep our intellect always on the go like a horse whipped by the matter."*

The three recent books that have come to me are: Ashok K. Banker's retelling of the Mahabharata **"The Seeds of War"** ; Chitra Divakaruni's **"The Palace of Illusion"** (2008), Kiran Nagarkar's **"Cuckold"** (1997). Ashok Banker's book "The Seeds of War" introduces to the elder protogonists of the epic as well as some of the great loves and lasts, friendships and enmities, politics and self-sacrifice that will lay the seeds that will eventually fester and erupt into the mother of all wars. A sample of Ashok Banker's prose:

"...Since Vichitravirya's passing, it had been Bhishma who appeared in her fantasies at night she longed for another man to hold and claim her. Now, her (Ambikas's) fantasies were about to become reality. She waited with tremulous anticipation" (337)

The narrator in Chitra Divakaruni's "The palace of Illusions" is Panchaali. Chitra has given us a woman's take on the timeless tale of the Mahabharata. Tracing Panchaali's Life- from fiery birth and lonely childhood, where her beloved brother is her only true companion, through her complicated friendship with the enigmatic Krishna; to marriage, motherhood and her secret attraction to the mysterious man who is her husband's most dangerous enemy- it's a deeply human story about a woman born into a man's world. A sample of Chitra's mellifluous prose:

"Through the long lonely years of my childhood, when my father's palace seemed to tighten its grip around me until I couldn't breathe, I would go to my nurse and ask for a story: And though she knew many wondrous and edifying tales, the one I made her tell me over and over was the story of my birth.

Kiran Nagarkar's book **"Cockold"** is set in the 16th century. It deals with the life of Mira, one of the greatest devotees of Krishna. The Rajput kingdom of Mewar is at the height of its power. It is locked in war with the sultanates of Delhi, Gujarat and Malwa. But there is another deadly battle being waged within Mewar itself. Who will inherit the throne after the death of the Maharana? The course of history, not just of Mewar but of the whole of India, is about to be changed forever, That is the bare plot-line:

Nagarkar sets up the old triangle of man, woman and lover and pushes it the edge to make it a love story of extraordinary beauty. This is how the story of Meera ends in the novel:

"The Little Saint, as we all know, became a very big saint. The measure of life in India is the commercial cinema. Indian cinema keeps going back to the Little Sand time and again.

In the 1980's it was discovered that like Joan of Arc, she was one of the earliest feminists. Meera is the subject of plays, dancers, poetry and painting. Her bhajans, lone-poetry and other kinds of verse are sung all over the country. More singers have recorded her songs than those of any other poet or saint. The other great Bhakti saints of India may have been intellectually more robust than her lent their fame is mostly regional. Her name is on almost every Indian's lips.

In conclusion, I want to end my rambling thoughts on the "Impact of the Mahabharata on English Literature" by quoting V.S. Sukthankar, that redoubtable scholar who has placed the epic in a perspective that has answered quite convincingly all the doubts raised by some western scholars about the chaotic nature of the epic that has, according to them, has grown unwieldy and out of proportion. Sukhthankar says at the end of his seminal work "On the Meaning of the Mahabharata" (1957)

"On account of the rapidly shifting planes of perspective of the vast canvas on which the epic poets operate in developing their three-dimensional theme, the construction of the story has naturally become very complex, and its form has given rise in modern times to many amusing misconceptions and to some grotesque theories.

"But I can assure you that there is no serious contradiction or inconsistency in the work, as you may have been led to believe from a cursory perusal of it.

"I hope I have succeeded in showing you that the Mahabharata, which may have started as an epic,has certainly not ended in becoming a chaos, as OLDENBERG Imaged. It would be a pardonable hyperbole to say that it has ended in becoming the cosmos, as it very modestly says of itself:

Yadihāsti tad anyatra yan nehāsti na tat kvacit/

"What is in this work may be found elsewhere, but what is not in this work is to be found nowhere"!

"The chaos which modern critics think they see in the Great Epic of India is but a reflex of the state of their own mind and not in the work at all, which on the other hand is a mighty pulsating work, clothing in noble language and with pleasing imagery and a profound and universal philosophy, a glowing and rhythmic synthesis of life."

After quoting the master, I have nothing more to add. My humble thanks for this wonderful opportunity. I thank you all. ❑

Dr. S.L. Bhyrappa after being felicitated pose with other dignitaries

Mahabharata - multiple perspectives

—**Prof. N. Manu Chakravarty**

My fundamental premise in this presentation is that the Mahabharata is a complex universe that holds innumerable worlds that cannot be reduced to produce a single meaning or experience. In other words the range of the Mahabharata totally defies all singular categorizations and goes beyond all well defined Ethical & Ideological positions. It is in the most salutary manner that I describe the Mahabharata as a profound ANARCHIC TEXT.

My fundamental premise in this presentation is that the Mahabharata is a complex universe that holds innumerable worlds that cannot be reduced to produce a single meaning or experience. The Mahabharata is perhaps the only text that human civilization has produced that works brilliantly though anomolies, paradoxes, dualities, contradictions without ever trying to resolve or reconcile them. It is a magnificent Anarchic text that thrives through its principle of Aporia and does not allow for simplified, reductionist leadings. One could easily converted the Mahabharata into a holy/sacred text of the religious kind, one could use it is a manifestation of divinity, other could use it as an ethical treatise dealing with the Good and Bad forces of life – it is even possible to render the Mahabharata in terms that are sharply political. The magnificence of the text is that it is each one of these in very sophisticated and complex ways but is not just one of these. In other words the range of the Mahabharata totally defies all singular categorizations and goes beyond all well defined Ethical & Ideological positions. It is in the most salutary manner that I describe the Mahabharata as a profound ANARCHIC TEXT.

What are the various levels at which the Mahabharata works? How do we in this post modern world comprehend the immensely unfathomable nature of this great text?

In this presentation I shall try to foreground a few of its extraordinary features. VYASA and the poetic conception of History. I shall refer to two scholars of repute who take up this vital position. That the Mahabharata contests two predominant western notions - first, it shows how inadequate and impoverished western scholarship is when it maintains that India never had a historical sense and that Indians never had a sense of history. The whole point is that the Mahabharata rejects the western linear view of history which is mostly preoccupied with events & human beings – with the idea of progress in a 'material sense'– the deterministic& materialistic view of history. The Mahabharata is cyclical in its vision and introduces TRANSCENDENTAL VALUES AND VISIONS to History and human civilization – through the mud slime and scholar of history of human like the Mahabharata is about IDEAS and values of TRANSCENDENCE - about transcending brutal power / mindless authority / destructive ego, Arrogance & pride - about Violations & Transgressions that Annihilate the SACRED principles of MORALITY - the MAHABHARATA is concerned with morality that is all – inclusive. It fully exposes the EVILS of STATE POWER OF – VIRULENT NATIONALISM OF DECADENT POLITICAL AUTHORITY. If one only turns to the Greek historians or later western historians like Spengler, Wopold Ranke, Herder, Hegel and even the lesser mistake Toyabee & Will Durant one sees the woeful paucity of such a profound understanding of history that the Mahabharata as refer to Prof. G.N. Chakravarthi's works (1) Philosophy of History in the Mahabharata and (2) 'ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಪ್ರದೀಪ' ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಕಲ್ಪ ಜಾಲಗಳು and Prof. B.K. Matilal in his "Epics & Ethics"

The Question of DIVINITY - Krishna and the principle of Divinity; The Mahabharata is a wonderful opposition to the idea of THEOCRACY that permeates the idea of

God in the Judeo- Christian tradition. The Eurocentric notion of God, the belief in God in the Judeo-Christian tradition is based on the belief is SALVATION, this is theocracy.

The Indian view of God is entirely different - OMMIPOTENCE is not a virtue Krishna himself is not OMNIPOTENT and he openly states it. He says in the world of human beings he cannot STOP ANY CATASTROPHE from happening. Krishna figures as a human being too. There are no incredible miracles - in fact that is to say that Divinity operates differently here, Krishna does not stop the destruction of his own Yadava class - human history cannot be altered by GOD - the Indian vision - this is the juxtaposition of a different & radical view of History & Divinity. So Krishna sees himself & is to be seen as a "participant" and as KALA - MAHAKALA - TIME - that CREATES & DESTROYS - this is so revealing - there is no sentimental / melodramatic SALVATION. In fact again Prof. G.N. Chakravarthy& Prof. Matilal foreground this aspect in their works.

The idea of Good & Evil: It is again the great vision of the Mahabharata that good and evil are not exclusivist qualities. There is no pure good nor is there any pure evil. The west puritanical Manichean category - the binary opposition between Good & Evil has no place in the great Indian creative traditions - no text co-emphytes this better than the Mahabharata. The Pandavas are not pure virtuous nor are the Kauravas, Duryodhana in particular, purely evil. Both have their grievous faults, both err, both transgress -both have their multiple failures - thus we do not have a reductionistic opposition between Good & Evil - they are innumerable shades of grey - they are inseparable. This is acknowledged by Krishna when he remains silent when Duryodhana points out the many transgressions / violations of ethical codes on his part & on the part of the Pandavas. Each violation as the part of one camp is juxtaposed with the violation on the part of the other. The courage that the Mahabharata displays is being openly ambivalent about the Pandavas& the Kowravas is a tribute to the perfect democratic visions of the creator of the Mahabharata. In fact it is for this reason that the author of the Mahabharata acknowledges something is all absolutely incredible manner - that Duryodhana reaches the heavens even before the Pandavas did the extraordinary in witness of Duryodhana as an exemplary king permeate the pages of the text. For that matter Bharavi in the Kiratarjuneeya describes Duryodhana as an ideal & a noble king worthy of all honour & respect.

It is in this context that the great text makes a distinction between Moral Visions and Moral Action. To have a moral vision is insufficient. What is of critical importance is that vision leading to a moral act establishes DHARMA - not the vision by itself. This explains the Fall of All - Dhritarashtra-Duryodhana & even Yudishtira Dharmaraya. The lack of WILL - supreme Will to translate a Vision into enact explains the total disintegration of the Pandavas& the Kauravas. The supreme vision of the Mahabharata which it also unfolds its understanding of Dharma history and civilization - is that eventually all struggle for Power & Authority in the temporal power is mutually destructive and one is left with nothing but Darkness & void. The utter futility of all power struggle is that the great text presents us all with.

There is yet another ethical dimension that the Mahabharata unfolds before us. And that pertains to the most fundamental questions that Draupadi asks all in the assembly. The absence of any kind of answer to her questions indicates the nature of the social context in which Draupadi is located. Many distinguished scholars point out that the entire discourse of Ethics in the Indian context could have changed radically if only Jurists, sociologists and other law makers had attempted to seriously consider Draupadi's questions. Even in the Mahabharata it is only Karna a minor character - marginalized person - who stands by Draupadi whereas all the venerable elders remain unethically silent. In this there is practically no area of life, no principle of human conduct that the Mahabharata does not enquire into.

It is for the fearless, intransigence of spirit of the MIND that the Mahabharata continuously reveals its multiple dimensions without ever privileging any ENTITY at any level - the Mahabharata is not a text that grants special virtues to any ENTITY in particular. Actually it demolishes the very basis of HIERARCHY - if any kind. It is truly Democratic. This being long it has always had a profound influence on ALL.

The Mahabharata in Kannada: Glimpses from Folk and Classical Traditions

Kannada has had a very complex and open relationship with several other linguistic and literary traditions - with Sanskrit, Prakrit, Telugu, Tamil, Marathi - and has come to mean an area of diverse Philosophical Traditions - the Vedantic, the Jaina, the Buddhist. Even the Vachana movement - often described as a radical departure from the Vedantic / the Sanskrit realm - did turn to the ethical vision / principles of the Agamika even as it moved away from it and drew from the Loukika the folk traditions. The inclusive nature of the Kannada traditions has consistently rejected antagonisms of all kinds projecting a cosmopolitan spirit that worked all along with the temper of the 'local' - the 'ಸ್ಥಳ'. In this sense the Kannada Tradition has not exhibited chauvinistic tendencies. Kannada Identity has never been singular and monolithic. This also means that the element of anxiety has not restricted the Kannada imagination - it has not allowed any impulse of threat reduce its range of thought & experience. In fact one of the early texts dealing with the Kannada language and culture, "Kavirajamarga" (9th century) establishes free negotiations with the world - between the **Kannada Jagath** and the world - it allows for negotiations between Kannada and the other realms. "Kavirajamarga" talks of Kannada as "VasudhaValayaVileenam" - that Kannada lives in its territory but is harmoniously aligned with the world the **Kannada cosmos is part of the larger Jagath.**

Literary negotiations in the Kannada traditions display amazing examples of intertextual and original exercises making it virtually impossible to separate Influences from originalities - what it suggests is that there is an organic relationship between scholarship and personal creativity with each transforming the other. Deep knowledge of the past of the textual traditions of the past - moulds the creative temples of the present while a very sensitive understanding of the contemporary world leads to a metamorphosis of the past - out of the transactions between scholarship and individual creativity a new idiom and a different understating of history, culture and human consciousness are produced. The part shapes the present which in turn re-contextualises the past going by its concerns, attitudes' conflicts and tensions. The Mahabharata and the Ramayana have been almost unavoidable presences in the Kannada literary and critical traditions and have manifested themselves in multiple ways all though, the two epics have worked in the form of paradigms that are to be employed in different ways going by the spirit of the age. What is of great interest is that the Kannada literary and critical traditions has never, ever, allowed the two paradigms attain a canonical status making it impossible to deconstruct and reconstruct them. They have not been canons in any sense, with freedom and daring the creative spirit of Kannada - all through the ages - about 11 centuries - has turned to the two epics constructing an incredible range of issues and preoccupations.

In this presentation I attempt to discuss the major texts from the classical tradition and a couple of representative texts from the 20th century I shall be referring to the poetic tradition and the dramatic tradition and shall also refer to an oral narrative that comes from the agrarian culture the folk narrative goes far beyond the concerns of the written traditions and in an unbelievable manner alters the contexts and the characters of all the texts of the written tradition. One could argue that this folk narrative is not at all indebted to the written traditions - Sanskrit & Kannada. It is a tradition built as folk memory & experience and is almost totally immemorial.

I shall begin by discussing two major texts of the 10th century. These two texts belong to the Jaina poets who turned to the Mahabharata and rendered it in Kannada altering the characters, the situations and the general contexts going by their respective political contexts. Though these two poets come from the Jaina tradition their approaches in terms of plot, thematic structure and the nature of emotion, the Rasa they worked out, were quite radically different. The structuring of the narrative was unconventional and the choice of the protagonists was unrelated to the source text - (had nothing to canvas with Vyasa's Mahabharata) in fact one cannot see any connectivity between the texts of the two poets, who, interestingly belonged to the same century. The divergences reveal an enormous lot about the range of the Kannada tradition.

I refer to Pampa's "VikramarjunaVijaya" and Ranna's "Gadhayuddha" also known as "Sahasa Bheema Vijaya". Pampa declares that he is going to write a Samasta Bharata - a comprehensive text but with several major changes, Arjuna is the protagonist of Pampa's text & Draupadi is his wife not of all the Pandavas. In Pampa's text the complexities of characters, context, circumstances are foregrounded in a major way as are the emotions of the characters - from rage, fury, arrogance, to regret, remorse and compassion. A simplistic vision of the human being is rendered impossible in the text for each character keeps evolving from stage to stage. The power of Pampa's poetry is such that it prevents any kind of valorization of any single character - for instance Karna occupies a major position in Pampa as does Duryodhana. Pampa does not operate in Manichean categories - portraying the Pandavas as ethical and the Kauravas as dehumanised unethical figures. There are no dark or evil characters in "VikramarjunaVijaya", Eventually Karna and Duryodhana attain redemption - find solution and reach a state of nobility. The politics of the times does influence Pampa's writing - especially when he makes Arjuna the protagonist - for Pampa's king Arikesari was known by that name. What is of crucial importance is the fact that Arikesari was not a Jaina and was a King with high ambition. As a legal subject Pampa could not place the Ahimsa value of his Jaina tradition for he was extolling the virtues of a Vaidika who was also his ruler. This necessitated upholding valour & Courage - of the Kshatra Dharma but as a Jaina, Pampa could never betray the supreme value of Ahimsa. The duality that Pampa had to conflict led him to be quite crafty in the choice of certain situations and episodes leading to a subtle dichotomy in his portrayal of Arikesari. One can, by a careful & Subtle reading of the text, notice that for all the heroism of Arikesari there is an inner flow, a kind of emptiness, his personality - Pampa is not able to reconcile the opposition between his conscious political stand and his profound unconscious Jaina faith. In spite of this divide Pampa creates a magnificent Kannada epic as "VikramarjunaVijaya". What is equally interesting is that the text which is apparently a loukika text is richly agamika as its inner spirit - one can see it is the manner in which Pampa invokes rishi Vardhana and the Jaina rishi lineage in his works. The Transcendental Rishi traditions of the Jainas operates in a subtle manner in VikramarjunaVijaya. The religion overlaps with the secular and with no obligation to Vyasa Pampa sculpts an autonomous work filled with high imagination and dense experience. The freedom that Pampa exercises is a rich tribute to the independent spirit of poetry that does not let socio political pressures control the poetic vision of human nature and social order - one can see it with specific reference to Karna who displays tremendous nobility and grace when he rejects Kunti& Krishna and goes far above the seductive power of Royalty when he disowns his royal lineage as the PrathamaPandava. "VikramarjunaVijaya"marks the triumph of a deep poetic vision that transcends temporal power, even, as it is embedded in its dense layers, and releases a supreme vision of spirituality. Working through the complicated structures of history Pampa creates a work that shows how the transcendental nature of hero's life cannot be suppressed by centres of power& Authority.

I now turn to Ranna's text "Gadhayuddha" or "SahasabheemaVijaya". If Pampa had Arjuna on the throne Ranna makes Bhima the central figure of his work. There is a great dramatic element in the text often tending towards the form of a drama/a play. Though emanating from a strong Jaina consciousness the play unleashes with extraordinary force and uncontrolled vigour the fury and tempestuous rage of human beings- particularly the offensive Duryodhana and the deeply offended Draupadi, Juxtaposed with these is the raging fire of Bhima out to seek revenge against Dushasana and Duryodhana. Howling with unmanageable anger Bhima shouts, screams looking for Duryodhana who is hiding deep inside the Vaishampayana lake. Ranna describes this most stunningly when he writes "ಆ ನೀರೊಳಗಿರ್ದುಂಬೆಮರ್ತನುರಗ ಪತಾಕಂ" with his great royal banner /the heroic flag intact Duryodhana perspired in the waters of the Vaishampayana lake-it is astonishing that a Jain poet lets loose all emotions of blazing fire giving full vent to feelings of hatred revenge and destruction raising human beings to the level of amoral elemental forces. The elemental nature of the human spirit lends an unusual quality of this Jaina work. The final triumph of Bhima, who, in an unethical way breaks Duryodhana's thigh celebrates violence at its peak. But "Gadhayuddha" tries to soften this Volcanic fury by ennobling Duryodhana by giving him great qualities of compassion, repentance towards enemies and admirable qualities of generosity, love or affection towards his friends. The text gives Duryodhana a lofty nature and this softens the unbridled emotions of Bhima & Draupadi. Infact Duryodhana chides Ashwathaman for slaughtering the innocent Upapandavas. He grieves over the death of the young Abhimanyu and displays noble fatherly emotions grieving over the death of his own "Children" (as he sees them), the passions of enmity have disappeared in him. This transcendence of Duryodhana is quite unnatural.Ranna also works as a contrast to Pampa who was more balanced in his approach. Ranna, like Pampa, had to be conscious of the patronage he enjoyed at his king Satyashraya, son of Tailapa. The secular world of the real politik did regulate the poetic vision of Ranna who made Satyashraya the Saahasa Bhima of his work.

We need to look at how the Jaina poets tried to balance the demands of secular politics with their inner callings- of the Jaina vision of ahimsa, like Pampa invoking the Jaina Rishies, Vrishabadeva for instance, Ranna invokes Ajitathirthankara- the thirthankaras constitute the philosophical lore of the text which, to a great extent, is shaped by the unfettered images of a poetic sensibility.

However, the Jaina imaginations runs into great difficulties when it deals with Violence, the Kshatra element for the edifice of the text comes from the Jaina belief in ahimsa, the spirit of Tyaga-of renunciation, The negotiations between the vaidika and the shramana tradition does affect the free spirit of the poet. Thus one notices an ambiguity in the text. If the valour and elemental strength of Bhima are presented in abundance there is also the magnanimity of Duryodhana which subtly surfaces on different occasions. Both Pampa and Ranna find the opposition between heroism and austerity almost impossible to manage in a fully satisfactory manner. This leaves the texts open and a sensitive reader can have a glimpse of the ambiguity that emerges from unsuspected quarters and in unexpected ways. The Jaina imagination was able to extricate itself rather early from the heavy constructs of Vyasa Mahabharata but could not handle the conflict between Kshatra &Tyaga-between the

Vaidika & the Shramana traditions. The irreconcilable element is quite significant as a guiding principle in our leading of early literary works.

The fifteenth century poet Kumaravyasa- coming from the Brahminical tradition upholding the vaidika way of life- created his Bharata without taking the challenges that his Jaina predecessors did. In fact Kumaravyasa's text is a conscious answer to Pampa in many ways. The waning of the Jaina spirit in Karnataka and the rise of a Brahmin consciousness have gone into the making of Kumaravyasa's Kannada Bharata. He calls it Krishna Kathe- the story of Krishna and fills his text with bhaktirasa. The text is a juxtaposition of two desperate but mutually related principles-DAIVA LEELA and Human passions. The text is not a mere mechanical reworking of Vyasa's text. It is the admiration of the life-vision of contemporary history- This sense of history permeates the whole text. The real world of passions- uncontrollable and leading to disasters- central to the vision of the text even as it is preoccupied with the cosmic role of divinity. (Through Pandu & Madri, Draupadi, Bhima, Arjuna and their passions in varied contexts) Kumaravyasa unfolds the nature & spirit of history which is shaped by human choices. The loss of wisdom when human beings are devoured by their passions forms the basic edifice of the text.

What is of significant value when it comes to explicating the Kumaravyasa Bharata is the emergence of the idea that the Kannada text provides a counterpoint to Sanskrit poetics by situating Bhakti as the legitimate emotions and by ignoring the Navarasas the text moves closer to the Vedic sense of the word as "mantra". The semantic principle of dealing with Meaning is not important here- this is perhaps the major reason why Kumaravyasa Bharata is more popular in the Gamaka form (oral rendering on musical lines)- though there is a Vyakhyana afterwards . However, the MAGIC of the "mantra" - the "Sound" attains greater prominence. It is because of the element of MORALITY that the text has POLYPHONY- where Krishna is not wholly Divine he is rooted in the human landscape making for a dynamic relationship with other human being-divinity manifests itself in normal human ways. The text relocates Krishna in many other ways-for instance, the Erotic element is avoided by the poet, who also skips several other situations found in Vyasa's text. Historical time is of supreme importance here, thus giving the text a great historical value. Abstract, amorphous constraints of TIME & DIVINITY are clearly eliminated by Kumaravyasa- The confrontation between human beings and the cosmic forces (FATE)- the "humanisation of the divine are poetic elements that make the reader turn to recognise HUMAN POTENTIAL as essential to history-mild passions, intractable emotions (of Duryodhana for instance) are human choices enabling human being to MEET this exigencies without fear or timidity in fact Duryodhana emerges as a magnificient figure as does Karna who never asks Krishna for a single thing- even when asked to do so- Karna, in the deep historical-human context is seen as a profoundly tragic figure weighed down by the oppressive caste system and pull down by his overwhelming feeling of gratitude towards Duryodhana. Kumaravyasa's Bharata is an outstanding testimony to an elevated poetic sensibility and the usually neglected relationship between poetry& history.

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Prof. Prabhunath Dwivedi, from Varanasi being felicitated by Dr. Madhu Pandit Dasa and Shri N. Ramanuja

Eschotology in the Mahabharata

—Dr. V.K. Hampiholi

The Mahābhārata, ascribed to Vedavyāsa, is an encyclopedic work. Hence it is aptly said that whatever is in the world is seen in the epic. And what is not seen in the epic is not in the world. The canvas of the story of the Mahābhārata is so wide that it pervades many sciences and many ideologies appropriately. The term eschatology includes what is death? Where the soul proceeds after leaving the body? Why it takes rebirth? We find many matters relating to eschatology in this epic in various places.

The Mahābhārata, ascribed to Vedavyāsa, is an encyclopedic work. We find all types of personalities, all kinds of facts, various arts and numerous sciences in this epic. Hence it is aptly said that whatever is in the world is seen in the epic. And what is not seen in the epic is not in the world.[1] The canvas of the story of the Mahābhārata is so wide that it pervades many sciences and many ideologies appropriately.

The Mahābhārata deals with all the matters relating to the life. Usually the life of the common man begins with the birth and ends with the death. Birth and death are so common and so natural in this mundane world, that no one takes it seriously. We experience the pleasure and pain during birth and death respectively but it is temporary. We do not think seriously why a person takes birth and why he dies. We are unaware of the fact that from where he enters the womb of the mother and where he proceeds after the death. In India except Cārvākas, all the schools of thought have accepted that body and soul are different and birth and death occurs to the body and not to the soul. The term eschatology includes what is death? Where the soul proceeds after leaving the body? Why it takes rebirth? We find many matters relating to eschatology in this epic in various places.

After the death of Abhimanyu, Yudhiṣṭira plunged into the sorrow. Vedavyāsa comes and consoles him with an anecdote which narrates the birth of Mṛtyudevatā. Lord Brahma, at the beginning of the creation, created many creatures with his power. At that time, as there was neither destroyer nor destruction, hence the earth became over burdened and overcrowded. Brahma having seen the overcrowd became helpless and thought about the plans to reduce the burden of the earth. As he did not find any solution he became furious. At that moment the fire springs out from his organs of sense[2] and it spread throughout the world and started to burn everything. Having seen this havoc, Lord Rudra came there and praised the Lord Brahma and requested to be calm and cool. He prays – O lord of earth, don't be angry with movable and immovable world. All the mountains, rivers and the trees are burning from the fire of your anger. All the creatures created by you are destroying by your rage; please take back the fire which has come out from your anger.[3] Having heard the words of Lord Rudra, Lord Brahma took back that fire which was the effect of his anger. At the same moment, a female form of black and red colour came out from all the organs of sense. Her tongue, face and eyes were tawny. She was decorated by golden ornaments. She stood at the southern side of Lord Brahma and smiled at them. Brahma told her that you have taken birth from my anger. Hence you have to kill all the human beings whether they may be well-read or fools. It will bring prosperity to you.[4] She having heard these words, wept with grief. She asked Brahma politely – O Brahma, how a woman created by you will indulge in this destructive work? I am afraid of this cruel work, because all the persons who suffer from the death of their kith and kin, will curse me. I do not enter the abode of Yama. Kindly allow me to practice austerities. Brahma became silent and smiled. When he smiled his rage vanished. All the worlds became free from the fire of his anger. The woman went to forest and started tapas. She practiced tapas for thousands of years and at last Brahma came there and asked the purpose of her tapas. She requested to make free from the destruction work. Lord Brahma states – O woman, there is nothing unrighteousness if you destroy all the beings. I have not spoken any untruth; the Dharma will consider you as sacred if you destroy the entire world. The protectors of the quarters, Yama and various diseases will assist you, Myself and all the Gods bestow on you a boon that you will always be free from sin and you will be respected for your faultless character.[5] The woman further requests Brahma that though she is created for the destruction of the beings, she should not be held response for the death of individuals. Let the greed, the anger, the envy, the jealousy, the treachery, the delusion, the shamelessness and the harsh words uttered for others will cause the death of individuals.[6] Thus the cause for the death of everyone is his own deeds and not other factors. The God of Death comes near a person according to his deeds. Therefore it is futile to mourn on death. The death is inevitable. It occurs to every born being. Every being face the death according to his deeds and not the God of death follow with a stick.[7]

In the Anuśāna parva we find another episode which narrates that the deeds of the individual become the cause for the death. After the eighteen days war and the death of eighteen akṣohiṇī army, Yudhiṣthira considers him responsible for all this havoc. He repents before Bhīṣma. At that time Bhīṣma consoles him by narrating this episode. There was old woman named Gautamī and she had a son. One day, that son was bitten by a serpent and he breathed his last immediately. There was a hunter called Arjunaka and he caught that serpent and brought before Gautamī and asked her permission to kill it. Gautamī insists him to leave that serpent as it has not done any mistake. Why are you gaining sin by killing the serpent? Moreover by killing the serpent my son will not come back. The death of my son is preplanned by the God. Hence I do not find any offence in this serpent.[8] But Arjunaka urges to kill the serpent as it has done an offence by biting the boy. Moreover the common people will be happy having seen the death of the offender. Hence kill the serpent. Gautamī refused the argument of Arjunaka and shows interest to save the life of the serpent. In the mean while, the serpent, which was in the control of the hunter, spoke with great difficulty. O Arjunaka, Why are you finding fault with me? I am dependent. With the instigation of Mṛtyu, I bit the boy. Hence I am innocent in this matter.[9] Arjunaka opined that though you are not independent you are the part of this offence. Hence you are fit to be punished.[10] The serpent advocates his innocence and declares that the offender is God Mṛtyu. Having heard and seen the situation God Mṛtyu came there and said to the serpent – No doubt I have instigated you to bite the boy. But, like you, I am also not independent. Kāla (Time) is superior to me and according to his instigation I made you to bite the boy. Hence the Kāla is the real offender and neither myself nor you. All the emotions of sātvika, rājasika and tāmasika are the product of Kāla. All the movable and immovable creatures of the earth and the heaven are under the control of Kāla. All the actions and non-actions along with its fruits are under the control of Kāla. The Sun, the Moon, the water, the wind, the Indra, the Agni, the sky, the earth, the rain, the rivers, the ocean, the existence and non-existence are created and destroyed by the Kāla. Hence, O serpent, how you have considered that I am offender.[11] The serpent told God Mṛtyu – O Mṛtyu, I have not told that you are responsible or not responsible for this offence. But I told only that I am instigated by you. My intention is only that I am innocent and not responsible for the death of this boy.[12] Thus the serpent exhibited its innocence and requested Arjunaka to release him. But the hunter did not agree and said that the serpent, the Mṛtyu and the Kāla are all offenders and all are fit to be punished. At this moment The Kālapuruṣa arrived there and said – O hunter, neither myself nor Mṛtyu and the serpent are not responsible for the death of this boy. We are not even instigators also. The boy is dead according to his deeds. The deeds (karma) are the cause for the death of every individual. The boy expired due to his karma, his karma has made him to die and all beings are under control of their karma only. In this world, according to karma, one gets one's relatives; one experiences the pleasure and the pain; one instigates or is instigated by others. Hence we all are not responsible for the death of this boy. The karma of the boy is the main cause for his death.[13] Having heard the words of Kāla, Gautamī, the mother of the dead boy, declares that the cause of the death of her son is the karma of her son and not the serpent, the Mṛtyu and Kāla. And moreover she accepted that her own karma is also responsible for losing her son. Hence let the Kāla and Mṛtyu go to their place; you make free the serpent.[14] Thus this episode reiterates that the karma done by the person is the cause for his death.

The Mahābhārata depicts two paths of Yamaloka which is 86000 yojana away from the earth.[15] One path is for the sinners and another is for the meritorious. The people who indulge in sinful acts will go in the path of sinners; and who does virtuous act will enter the path of meritorious. The path of the sinners is terrible and horrible. There is neither shade of the trees nor lakes; neither rivers nor wells; There is no halting place, resting place, homes, mountains, cistern, and caves. We do not find any village, hermit, garden, forest and shelter.[16] During the last breath, a person suffers a lot. His soul with causal principle comes out from the body and enters new body which appears like old body. The colour, the form and the size of the new body is same like old body. But it will not be seen by anybody. The new body cannot be destroyed by cutting or breaking or burning or beating.[17] The journey towards Yamaloka begins with this body.

The servants of Yamadharma who have horrible and terrible forms, who are cruel and who have various weapons arrest the soul forcibly and take it towards Yamaloka. Though the soul is not ready to be away from its relatives it has to move with its deeds done during life time. The soul has to leave all his relatives who are weeping. All relatives like mother, father, brother, maternal uncle, wife, son and friends are detached from him. The soul having seen the pitiable condition of its relatives it feels very sorry. But nobody glances it as it has aerial form.[18] The journey is full of sorrow. The soul is beaten with sharp whip by the servants of Yamadharma, ; It moves with fear, stumbles many times; wanders like mad; weeps with pain; hears harsh words; trembles with fear. It receives the beating of stick, throwing of stones and burning wood stick, piercing of hook and striking with a lash..[19] There is description of hell in Svargārohaṇaparva (second adhyāya) when Yudhiṣṭhira wants to meet his brothers.

The person who gives charity to the Brahmin or well - read or needy, will go to Yamaloka by the vehicle dragged by the oxen. Many beautiful damsels serve him. The people who speak truth without any deceit, who give cows in charity, who donate slippers, umbrella and beds, who handover fruits and flowers in charity, who give water or arrange for water by building tank, lake, well, pond, and who construct beautiful temples reach Yamālaya without any difficulty. The Mahābhārata depicts that the person who do meritorious deeds will enter Yamālaya with great honour.[20]

The conversation held between Śiva and Pāravatī (Anuśāna 145) clearly mentions that all the beings enjoy and suffer according to their karma. Śiva narrates the fruits of every karma in detail. In the meanwhile the Mahābhārata substantiates the concept of the rebirth. We find many stories and episodes which depict the dead and the fruit of karma in detail. Lord Śiva explains how a soul gets another birth and how karma plays an important role in gaining rebirth.

The story of the insect depicted in the Anuśāna parva (117-119) clearly shows that by good karma an insect takes birth in kṣatriya dynasty and afterwards in Brahmin family. The whole Maābhārata describes the concept of death and life after death according to the tradition of Hindu culture. It is well known throughout the world that the theory of Karma and the theory of Rebirth are the contribution of Hindu Dharma to the world and the world is accepting this truth gradually.

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2 प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा तदा ब्रह्मा आदिसर्गे पितामहः । असंहृतं महातेजा दृष्ट्वा जगदिदं प्रभुः ॥ तस्य चिन्ता समुत्पन्ना संहारं प्रति पार्थिव । चिन्तयन्न ह्यसौ वेद संहारं वसुधाधिप ॥ तस्य रोषान्महाराज खेभ्योऽग्निरुदतिष्ठत । तेन सर्वा दिशो व्याप्ताः सन्तर्देशा दिधक्षता ॥ द्रोण. ५२. ३८–४०

3 संहारार्थं प्रसीदस्व मा रुषो वसुधाधिप । मा प्रजाः स्थावराश्चैव जंगमाश्च व्यनीनशः ॥ तव प्रसादाद् भगवन्निदं वर्तेत् त्रिधा जगत् । अनागतमतीतं च यच्च सम्प्रति वर्तते ॥ भगवन् क्रोधसंदीप्तः क्रोधादग्निमवासृजत् । स दहत्यश्मकूटानि द्रुमांश्च सरितस्तथा ॥ सर्वे हि सृष्टा नश्यन्ति तव देव कथंचन । तस्मान्निवर्ततां तेजत्वय्येवेदं प्रलीयताम् ॥ द्रोण. ५३. ६–११

4 उपसंहारतस्तस्य तमग्निं रोषजं तथा । प्रादुर्बभूव विश्वेभ्यो गोभ्यो नारी महात्मनः ॥ कृष्णरक्ता तथा पिंगरक्तजिह्वास्यलोचना । कुण्डलाभ्यांच राजेन्द्र तप्ताभ्यां तप्तभूषण । सा निःसृत्य तथा खेभ्यो दक्षिणां दिशमाश्रिता ॥ स्मयमाना च सावेक्ष्य देवौ विश्वेश्वरावुभौ ॥ त्वं हि सहार बुद्ध्याथ प्रादुर्भूता रुषो मम । तस्मात् संहर सर्वांस्त्वं प्रजाः सजडपंडिताः ॥ द्रोण. ५३. १७–२१

5 अधर्मो नास्ति ते मृत्यो संहरन्त्या इमाः प्रजाः । मया चोक्तं मृषा भद्रे भविता न कथंचन ॥ तस्मात् संहर कल्याणि प्रजाः सर्वाश्चतुर्विधाः । धर्मः सनातनश्च त्वां सर्वथा पावयिष्यति ॥ लोकपालो यमश्चैव सहाया व्याधयश्च ते । अहं विबुधाश्चैव पुनर्दास्याम ते वरम् ॥ यथा त्वमेनसा मुक्ता विरजाः ख्यातिमेष्यसि ॥ द्रोण. ५४. ३३–३६

6 लोभः क्रोधोऽभ्यसूयेर्ष्याद्रोहो मोहश्च देहिनाम् । अह्रीश्चान्योन्यपरुषा देहं भिन्द्युः पृथग्विधाः ॥ ५४.३८

7 आत्मानं वै प्राणिनो घ्नन्ति सर्वे नतान् मृत्युर्दण्डपाणिर्हिनस्ति ॥ द्रोण. ५४. ५०

8 हत्वा चैनं नामृतः स्यादयं मे जीवत्यस्मिन् कोऽत्ययः स्यादयं ते । अस्योत्सर्गे प्राणयुक्तस्य जन्तोर्मृत्युलोकं को नु गच्छेदनन्तम् ॥ अनु. १.२३

9 कोन्वर्जुनक दोषोऽत्र विद्यते मम बालिश । अस्वतंत्रं हि मां मृत्युर्विवशं यदवूचुदत् ॥ तस्यायं वचनाद् दष्टो न कोपेन न काम्यया । तस्य तत्किल्बिषं लुब्ध विद्यते यदि किल्बिषम् ॥ अन्. १. ३५,३६

10 यद्यन्यवशगेनेदं कृतं ते पन्नगाशुभम् । कारणं वै त्वमप्यत्र तस्मात् त्वमपि किल्बिषी ॥ अनु.१.३५.३७

11 प्रचोदितोऽहं कालेन पन्नग त्वामचूचुदम् । विनाश हेतुर्नास्य त्वमहं न प्राणिनः शिशोः ॥ सात्विका राजसाश्चैव तामसा येच केचन । भावाः कालात्मकाः सर्वे प्रवर्तन्ते ह जन्तुषु ॥ जङ्गमास्थावराश्चैव दिवि वा यदि वा भुवि । सर्वे कालात्मिकाः सर्प कालात्मकमिदं जगत् ॥ प्रवृत्तयश्च लोकेऽस्मिंस्तथैव च निवृत्तयः । तासां विकृतयो याश्च सर्वं कालात्मकं स्मृतम् ॥ आदित्यश्चन्द्रमा विष्णुरापो वायुः शतक्रतुः । अग्निः खं पृथिवी मित्रः पर्जन्यो वसवोऽदितिः ॥ सरितः सागराश्चैव भावाभावौ च पन्नग । सर्वे कालेन सृज्यन्ते ह्रियन्ते च पुनः पुनः ॥ एवं ज्ञात्वा कथं मां त्वं सदोषं सर्प मन्यसे । अथ चैवंगते दोषेम्यि त्वमपि दोषवान् ॥ अनु. १. ५०–५७

12 निर्दोषं दोषवन्तं वा न त्वां मृत्यो ब्रवीम्यहम् । त्वयाहं चोदित इति ब्रवीम्येतावदेव ॥ अनु. १.५८

13 नह्ययं नाप्ययं मृत्युर्नायं लुब्धक पन्नग । किल्बिषी जन्तुमरणे न वयं हि प्रयोजकाः ॥ अकरोरद् यदयं कर्म तन्नोऽर्जुनक चोदकम् । विनाशहेतुर्नान्योऽस्य वध्यतेऽयं स्वकर्मणा ॥ यदनेन कृतं कर्म तेनायं निधनं गतः । विनाशहेतुः कर्मास्य सर्वे कर्मवशा वयम् । कर्म दायादवांल्लोकः कर्म सम्बन्धलक्षणः । कर्माणि चोदयन्तीह यथान्योन्यं तथा वयम् ॥ एवं नाहं न वै मृत्युः न सर्पो न तथा भवान् । न चेयं ब्राह्मणी वृद्धा शिशुरेवात्र कारणम् ॥ अनु.१. ७०–७६

14 नैव कालो न भुजगो न मृत्युरिह कारणम् । स्वकर्मभिरयं बालः कालेन निधनं गतः ॥ मया च तत्कृतं कर्म येनायं मृतः सुतः । यातु कालस्तथा मृत्युः मुंचार्जुनक पन्नगम् ॥ अनु.१.७८,७९

15 षडशीति सहस्राणि योजनानां युधिष्ठिर । मानुषस्य च लोकस्य चान्तरम् ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२.५

16 न तत्र वृक्षछाया वा न तटाकं सरोऽपि वा । न वाप्यो दीर्घिका वापि न कूपो वा युधिष्ठिर ॥ न मण्डपं सभा वापि न प्रपा न निकेतनम् । न पर्वतो, नदी वापि न भूमेर्विवरं क्वचित् ॥ न ग्रामो नाश्रमो वापि नोद्यानं वा वनानि च । न किंचिदाश्रयस्थानं पथि तस्मिन् युधिष्ठिर ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२ पृ. ६३२२

17 जन्तोर्हि प्राप्तकालस्य वेदनार्तस्य वै भृशम् । कारणैस्त्यक्तदेहस्य प्राणैः कण्ठगतैः पुनः ॥ शरीरमन्यत् तद्रूपं तद्वर्णं तत्प्रमाणतः । अदृश्यं तत्प्रविष्टस्तु सोऽप्यदृष्टोऽथ केनचित् ॥ सोन्तरात्मा देहवतामष्टांगो यस्तु संचरेत् । छेदनात् भेदनात् दाहात् ताडनात् वा न नश्यति ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२ पृ. ६३२२

18 नानारूपधरैर्घोरैः प्रचण्डैश्चण्डसाधनैः नीयमानो दुराधर्षैर्यमदूतैर्यमाज्ञया । पुत्रदारमयैः पाशैःसम्निरुद्धोऽवशो बलात् । स्वकर्मभिश्चानुगतः कृतैः सुकृतदुष्कृतैः ॥ आक्रन्दमानः करुणं बन्धुभिर्दुःखपीडितैः । त्यक्त्वा बन्धुजनं सर्वं निरपेक्षस्तु गच्छति ॥ मातृभिः पितृभिश्चैव भ्रातृभिर्मातुलैस्तथा । दारैः पुत्रर्वयस्यैश्च रुदद्धिस्त्यज्यते पुनः ॥ अदृश्यमानस्तैर्दीनैरश्रुपूर्णमुखेक्षणैः । स्वशरीरं परित्यज्य वायुभूतस्तु गच्छति ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२ पृ. ६३२३

19 क्वचिद्भीतैः क्वचिन्मत्तैः प्रस्खलद्धिः क्वचित् क्वचित् । क्रन्दद्भिर्वेदनार्तैस्तु गन्तव्यं यमसादनम् । निर्भत्स्यर्मानैरुद्विग्नैर्विधूतैर्भयैर्भयविह्वलैः ॥ तुद्यमानशरीरैश्च गन्तव्यं तर्जितैस्तथा ॥ काष्ठोपलशिलाघातैर्दण्डोल्मुककशांकुशैः । हन्यमानैर्यमपुरं गन्तव्यं धर्मवर्जितैः ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२ पृ. ६३२३

20 ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रदानानि नानारूपाणि पाण्डव ।ये प्रयच्छन्ति विप्रेभ्यःते सुखं यान्ति तत्फलम् ॥ ये च नित्यं प्रभाषन्ते सत्यं निष्कल्मषं वचः । ते च यान्त्यमलाभ्राभैर्विमानैर्वृषयोजितैः॥ कपिलाद्यानि पुण्यानि गो प्रदानानि ये नराः । -- उपानहौ च छत्रं च शयनान्यासनानि च ।--ये फलानि प्रयच्छन्ति पुष्पाणि सुरभीणि च पानीयं ये प्रयच्छन्ति सर्वभूत प्रजीवनम् । -- तेषां वाप्याश्च कूपाश्च तटाकानि सरांसि च । दीर्घिकाः पुष्करिण्यश्च सजलाश्च जलाशयाः ॥ आश्वमेधिक. ९२ पृ.६३२४, ६३२५

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pure devotion of kuntidevi

—Sri. Shukadeva Dasa

The value of studying the Mahabharata lies in the fact that Vyasadeva has described the personality of pure devotees in this epic. Pure devotees are essentially completely free from envy. They are described as "nirmatsara" or non-envious. Therefore, all the actions of the pure devotees are only meant for the ultimate welfare of others. Ordinary people who are not conversant with the science of pure devotion may misunderstand pure devotees to be like ordinary people of this world. However, such pure devotees are glorified in the scriptures.

Srila Prabhupada gives a brief description of the personality of Kuntidevi in the Srimad Bhagavatam

The Mahabharata is the greatest Sanskrit epic poem written by Vyasadeva who compiled the Vedic literature towards the end of Dvapara yuga. Why is the Mahabharata so popular? His Divine grace Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada explains:

"There is a great difference between mundane stories, fiction, or history and the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. The histories of the whole universe contain references to the pastimes of the incarnations of the Lord. The Rāmāyaṇa, the Mahābhārata, and the Purāṇas are histories of bygone ages recorded in connection with the pastimes of the incarnations of the Lord and therefore remain fresh even after repeated readings."

Srila Prabhupada says that to better appreciate the Mahabharata, we should refer to the Srimad Bhagavatam. He cites the following verse from the Garuda Purana:

artho 'yaṁ brahma-sūtrāṇāṁ
bhāratārtha-vinirṇayaḥ
gāyatrī-bhāṣya-rūpo 'sau
vedārtha-paribṛṁhitaḥ
purāṇānāṁ sāma-rūpaḥ
sākṣād-bhagavatoditaḥ
dvādaśa-skandha-yukto 'yaṁ
śata-viccheda-saṁyutaḥ
grantho 'ṣṭādaśa-sāhasraḥ
śrīmad-bhāgavatābhidhaḥ

"The meaning of the Vedānta-sūtra is present in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. **The full purport of the Mahābhārata is also there.** The commentary of the Brahma-gāyatrī is also there and fully expanded with all Vedic knowledge. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the supreme Purāṇa, and it was compiled by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Vyāsadeva. There are twelve cantos, 335 chapters and eighteen thousand verses."

In the Srimad Bhagavatam it is stated that the less intelligent classes of people, namely women, śūdras and unqualified sons of the higher classes, are devoid of necessary qualifications to understand the purpose of the transcendental Vedas. Out of compassion for them, the great sage Vyasadeva compiled **the Mahabharata so that this would enable them to achieve the ultimate goal of life.**

strī-śūdra-dvijabandhūnāṁ
trayī na śruti-gocarā
karma-śreyasi mūḍhānāṁ
śreya evaṁ bhaved iha
iti bhāratam ākhyānaṁ
kṛpayā muninā kṛtam

The Mahabharata is not an imaginary story. Neither is it mythology as generally described by people with a poor fund of knowledge. It is authentic history of Greater India. Formerly the entire planet was called Bharatavarsha. All the characters in the Mahabharata are real persons who traversed the earth in a former yuga. Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada explains:

"Men with a poor fund of knowledge only accept the history of the world from the time of Buddha, or since 600 B.C., and prior to this period all histories mentioned in the scriptures are calculated by them to be only imaginary stories. That is not a fact. **All the stories mentioned in the Purāṇas and Mahābhārata, etc., are**

actual histories, not only of this planet but also of millions of other planets within the universe. Sometimes the history of planets beyond this world appear to such men to be unbelievable. But they do not know that different planets are not equal in all respects and that therefore some of the historical facts derived from other planets do not correspond with the experience of this planet. Considering the different situation of different planets and also time and circumstances, there is nothing wonderful in the stories of the Purāṇas, nor are they imaginary. We should always remember the maxim that one man's food is another man's poison. We should not, therefore, reject the stories and histories of the Purāṇas as imaginary. The great ṛṣis like Vyāsa had no business putting some imaginary stories in their literatures."

The value of studying the Mahabharata lies in the fact that Vyasadeva has described the personality of pure devotees in this epic. Pure devotees are essentially completely free from envy. They are described as "nirmatsara" or non-envious. Therefore, all the actions of the pure devotees are only meant for the ultimate welfare of others. Ordinary people who are not conversant with the science of pure devotion may misunderstand pure devotees to be like ordinary people of this world. However, such pure devotees are glorified in the scriptures.

Srila Prabhupada gives a brief description of the personality of Kuntidevi in the Srimad Bhagavatam as follows:

Kuntidevi was born as the daughter of Mahārāja Śūrasena, who was the sister of Vasudeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's father. Later she was adopted by Mahārāja Kuntibhoja, and hence she is known as Kuntī. She is the incarnation of the success potency of the Personality of Godhead. The heavenly denizens from the upper planets used to visit the palace of King Kuntibhoja, and Kuntī was engaged for their reception. She also served the great mystic sage Durvāsā, and being satisfied by her faithful service, Durvāsā Muni gave her a mantra by which it was possible for her to call for any demigod she pleased. As a matter of inquisitiveness, she at once called for the sun-god, who desired couplement with her, but she declined. But the sun-god assured her immunity from virgin adulteration, and so she agreed to his proposal. As a result of this couplement, she became pregnant, and Karṇa was born by her. By the grace of the sun, she again turned into a virgin girl, but being afraid of her parents, she placed the newly born child, Karna in a basket and cast it away in a river. After that, when she actually selected her own husband, she preferred Pāṇḍu to be her husband. Mahārāja Pāṇḍu later wanted to retire from family life and adopt the renounced order of life. Kuntī refused to allow her husband to adopt such life, but at last Mahārāja Pāṇḍu gave her permission to become a mother of sons by calling some other suitable personalities. Kuntī did not accept this proposal at first, but when vivid examples were set by Pāṇḍu she agreed. Thus by dint of the mantra awarded by Durvāsā Muni she called for Dharmarāja, and thus Yudhiṣṭhira was born. She called for the demigod Vāyu, and thus Bhīma was born. She called for Indra, the King of heaven, and thus Arjuna was born. The other two sons, namely Nakula and Sahadeva, were begotten by Pāṇḍu himself in the womb of Mādrī. Later on, Mahārāja Pāṇḍu died at an early age, for which Kuntī was so aggrieved that she fainted. Two co-wives, namely Kuntī and Mādrī, decided that Kuntī should live for the maintenance of the five minor children, the Pāṇḍavas, and Mādrī should accept the satī rituals by meeting voluntary death along with her husband. This agreement was endorsed by great sages like Śataśṛṅga and others present on the occasion. Later on, when the Pāṇḍavas were banished from the kingdom by the intrigues of Duryodhana, Kuntī followed her sons, and she equally faced all sorts of difficulties during those days. During the forest life one demon girl, Hiḍimbā, wanted Bhīma as her husband. Bhīma refused, but when the girl approached Kuntī and Yudhiṣṭhira, they ordered Bhīma to accept her proposal and give her a son. As a result of this combination, Ghaṭotkaca was born, and he fought very valiantly with his father against the Kauravas. In their forest life they lived with a brāhmaṇa family that was in trouble because of one Bakāsura demon, and Kuntī ordered Bhīma to kill the Bakāsura to protect the brāhmaṇa family against troubles created by the demon. She advised Yudhiṣṭhira to start for the Pāñcāladeśa. Draupadī was gained in this Pāñcāladeśa by Arjuna, but by order of Kuntī all five of the Pāṇḍava brothers became equally the husbands of Pāñcālī, or Draupadī. She was married with five Pāṇḍavas in the presence of Vyāsadeva. Kuntīdevī never forgot her first child, Karṇa, and after Karṇa's death in the Battle of Kurukṣetra she lamented and admitted before her other sons that Karṇa was her eldest son prior to her marriage with Mahārāja Pāṇḍu. Her prayers for Lord Krishna after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, when Lord Krishna was returning home, are excellently explained in the Srimad Bhagavatam. Later she went to the forest with Gāndhārī for severe penance. She used to take meals after each thirty days. She finally sat down in profound meditation and later burned to ashes in a forest fire.

Kuntidevi's prayers in the Srimad Bhagavatam establish her pure devotion to the supreme Lord Krishna. Her prayers are given below:

kunty uvāca
namasye puruṣaṁ tvādyam
īśvaraṁ prakṛteḥ param
alakṣyaṁ sarva-bhūtānām
antar bahir avasthitam

Śrīmatī Kuntī said: O Kṛṣṇa, I offer my obeisances unto You because You are the original personality and are unaffected by the qualities of the material world. You are existing both within and without everything, yet You are invisible to all.

māyā-javanikācchannam
ajñādhokṣajam avyayam
na lakṣyase mūḍha-dṛśā
naṭo nāṭyadharo yathā

Being beyond the range of limited sense perception, You are the eternally irreproachable factor covered by the curtain of deluding energy. You are invisible to the foolish observer, exactly as an actor dressed as a player is not recognized.

tathā paramahaṁsānāṁ
munīnām amalātmanām
bhakti-yoga-vidhānārthaṁ
kathaṁ paśyema hi striyaḥ

You Yourself descend to propagate the transcendental science of devotional service unto the hearts of the advanced transcendentalists and mental speculators, who are purified by being able to discriminate between matter and spirit. How, then, can we women know You perfectly?

kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya
devakī-nandanāya ca
nanda-gopa-kumārāya
govindāya namo namaḥ

Let me therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who has become the son of Vasudeva, the pleasure of Devakī, the boy of Nanda and the other cowherd men of Vṛndāvana, and the enlivener of the cows and the senses.

namaḥ paṅkaja-nābhāya
namaḥ paṅkaja-māline
namaḥ paṅkaja-netrāya
namas te paṅkajāṅghraye

My respectful obeisances are unto You, O Lord, whose abdomen is marked with a depression like a lotus flower, who are always decorated with garlands of lotus flowers, whose glance is as cool as the lotus and whose feet are engraved with lotuses.

yathā hṛṣīkeśa khalena devakī
kaṁsena ruddhāticiraṁ śucārpitā
vimocitāhaṁ ca sahātmajā vibho
tvayaiva nāthena muhur vipad-gaṇāt

O Hṛīkeśa, master of the senses and Lord of lords, You have released Your mother, Devakī, who was long imprisoned and distressed by the envious King Kaṁsa, and me and my children from a series of constant dangers.

viṣān mahāgneḥ puruāda-darśanād
asat-sabhāyā vana-vāsa-kṛcchrataḥ
mṛdhe mṛdhe 'neka-mahārathāstrato
drauṇy-astrataś cāsma hare' bhirakitāḥ

My dear Kṛṣṇa, Your Lordship has protected us from a poisoned cake, from a great fire, from cannibals, from the vicious assembly, from sufferings during our exile in the forest and from the battle where great generals fought. And now You have saved us from the weapon of Aśvatthāmā.

vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat
tatra tatra jagad-guro
bhavato darśanaṁ yat syād
apunar bhava-darśanam

I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths.

janmaiśvarya-śruta-śrībhir
edhamāna-madaḥ pumān
naivārhaty abhidhātuṁ vai
tvām akiñcana-gocaram

My Lord, Your Lordship can easily be approached, but only by those who are materially exhausted. One who is on the path of [material] progress, trying to improve himself with respectable parentage, great opulence, high education and bodily beauty, cannot approach You with sincere feeling.

namo 'kiñcana-vittāya
nivṛtta-guṇa-vṛttaye
ātmārāmāya śāntāya
kaivalya-pataye namaḥ

My obeisances are unto You, who are the property of the materially impoverished. You have nothing to do with the actions and reactions of the material modes of nature. You are self-satisfied, and therefore You are the most gentle and are master of the monists.

manye tvāṁ kālam īśānam
anādi-nidhanaṁ vibhum
samaṁ carantaṁ sarvatra
bhūtānāṁ yan mithaḥ kaliḥ

My Lord, I consider Your Lordship to be eternal time, the supreme controller, without beginning and end, the all-pervasive one. In distributing Your mercy, You are equal to everyone. The dissensions between living beings are due to social intercourse.

na veda kaścid bhagavaṁś cikīrṣitaṁ
tavehamānasya nṛṇāṁ viḍambanam
na yasya kaścid dayito 'sti karhicid
dveṣyaś ca yasmin viṣamā matir nṛṇām

O Lord, no one can understand Your transcendental pastimes, which appear to be human and are so misleading. You have no specific object of favor, nor do You have any object of envy. People only imagine that You are partial.

janma karma ca viśvātmann
ajasyākartur ātmanaḥ
tiryaṅ-nṝṣiṣu yādaḥsu
tad atyanta-viḍambanam

Of course it is bewildering, O soul of the universe, that You work, though You are inactive, and that You take birth, though You are the vital force and the unborn. You Yourself descend amongst animals, men, sages and aquatics. Verily, this is bewildering.

gopyādade tvayi kṛtāgasi dāma tāvad
yā te daśāśru-kalilāñjana-sambhramākṣam
vaktraṁ ninīya bhaya-bhāvanayā sthitasya
sā māṁ vimohayati bhīr api yad bibheti

My dear Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodā took up a rope to bind You when You committed an offense, and Your perturbed eyes overflooded with tears, which washed the mascara from Your eyes. And You were afraid, though fear personified is afraid of You. This sight is bewildering to me.

kecid āhur ajaṁ jātaṁ
puṇya-ślokasya kīrtaye
yadoḥ priyasyānvavāye
malayasyeva candanam

Some say that the Unborn is born for the glorification of pious kings, and others say that He is born to please King Yadu, one of Your dearest devotees. You appear in his family as sandalwood appears in the Malaya hills.

apare vasudevasya
devakyāṁ yācito 'bhyagāt
ajas tvam asya kṣemāya
vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām

Others say that since both Vasudeva and Devakī prayed for You, You have taken Your birth as their son. Undoubtedly You are unborn, yet You take Your birth for their welfare and to kill those who are envious of the demigods.

bhārāvatāraṇāyānye
bhuvo nāva ivodadhau
sīdantyā bhūri-bhāreṇa
jāto hyātma-bhuvārthitaḥ

Others say that the world, being overburdened like a boat at sea, is much aggrieved, and that Brahmā, who is Your son, prayed for You, and so You have appeared to diminish the trouble.

bhave 'smin kliśyamānānām
avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ
śravaṇa-smaraṇārhāṇi
kariyann iti kecana

And yet others say that You appeared to rejuvenate the devotional service of hearing, remembering, worshiping and so on in order that the conditioned souls suffering from material pangs might take advantage and gain liberation.

śṛṇvanti gāyanti gṛṇanty abhīkṣṇaśaḥ
smaranti nandanti tavehitaṁ janāḥ
ta eva paśyanty acireṇa tāvakaṁ
bhava-pravāhoparamaṁ padāmbujam

O Kṛṣṇa, those who continuously hear, chant and repeat Your transcendental activities, or take pleasure in others' doing so, certainly see Your lotus feet, which alone can stop the repetition of birth and death.

apyadya nas tvaṁ sva-kṛtehita prabho
jihāsasi svit suhṛdo 'nujīvinaḥ
yeṣāṁ na cānyad bhavataḥ padāmbujāt
parāyaṇaṁ rājasu yojitāṁhasām

O my Lord, You have executed all duties Yourself. Are you leaving us today, though we are completely dependent on Your mercy and have no one else to protect us, now when all kings are at enmity with us?

ke vayaṁ nāma-rūpābhyāṁ
yadubhiḥ saha pāṇḍavāḥ
bhavato 'darśanaṁ yarhi
hṛṣīkāṇām iveśituḥ

As the name and fame of a particular body is finished with the disappearance of the living spirit, similarly if You do not look upon us, all our fame and activities, along with the Pāṇḍavas and Yadus, will end at once.

neyaṁ śobhiṣyate tatra
yathedānīṁ gadādhara
tvat-padair aṅkitā bhāti
sva-lakṣaṇa-vilakṣitaiḥ

O Gadādhara [Kṛṣṇa], our kingdom is now being marked by the impressions of Your feet, and therefore it appears beautiful. But when You leave, it will no longer be so.

ime jana-padāḥ svṛddhāḥ
supakvauṣadhi-vīrudhaḥ
vanādri-nady-udanvanto
hyedhante tava vīkṣitaiḥ

All these cities and villages are flourishing in all respects because the herbs and grains are in abundance, the trees are full of fruits, the rivers are flowing, the hills are full of minerals and the oceans full of wealth. And this is all due to Your glancing over them.

atha viśveśa viśvātman
viśva-mūrte svakeṣu me
sneha-pāśam imaṁ chindhi
dṛḍhaṁ pāṇḍuṣu vṛṣṇiṣu

O Lord of the universe, soul of the universe, O personality of the form of the universe, please, therefore, sever my tie of affection for my kinsmen, the Pāṇḍavas and the Vṛṣṇis.

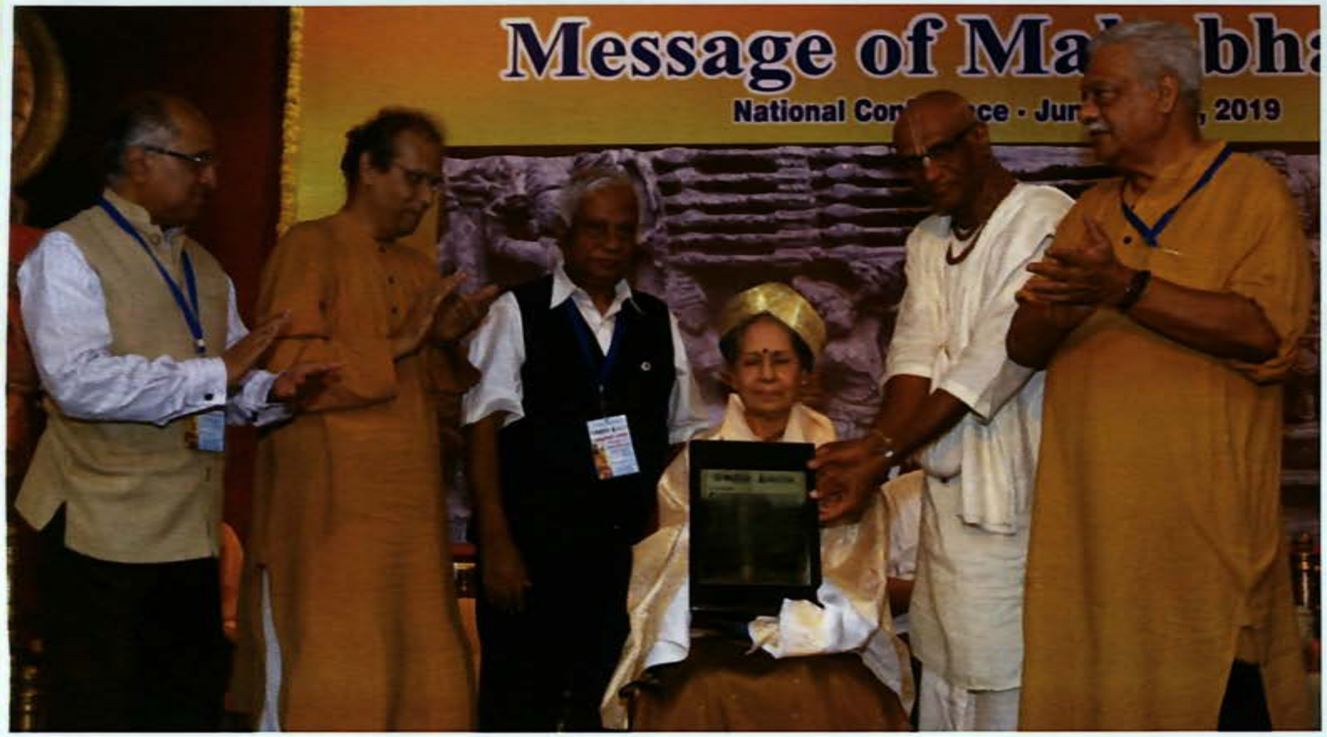
tvayi me 'nanya-viṣayā
matir madhu-pate 'sakṛt
ratim udvahatād addhā
gaṅgevaugham udanvati

O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.

śrī-kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-sakha vṛṣṇy-ṛṣabhāvani-dhrug-
rājanya-vaṁśa-dahanānapavarga-vīrya
govinda go-dvija-surārti-harāvatāra
yogeśvarākhila-guro bhagavan namas te

O Kṛṣṇa, O friend of Arjuna, O chief amongst the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, You are the destroyer of those political parties which are disturbing elements on this earth. Your prowess never deteriorates. You are the proprietor of the transcendental abode, and You descend to relieve the distresses of the cows, the brāhmaṇas and the devotees. You possess all mystic powers, and You are the preceptor of the entire universe. You are the almighty God, and I offer You my respectful obeisances.

❑



Dr. Saroja Bhate, from Pune being felicitated by Dr. Madhu Pandit Dasa, President, ISKCON, Bengaluru, while others join

influence of mahabbharatha in the murals and sculptures of kerala

—Dr. M.G. Sasibhooshan

Sculptural art deployed dramatic themes like the ***Kirata Arjuneeyam*** story on wooden brackets supporting the roof of the sanctums or Namaskara mandapams in temples. Excellent workmanship of this can still be found in many temples of Kerala in places like ***Kaviyoor, Kadavalloor, Kottakkal, Payyannoor***, ***Peruvanam and Triperumthura***. The whole narrative is portrayed inclusively in either 9 or 12 brackets by the sculptors.

In the temples of medieval Kerala there was a custom of reading the Mahabharata daily. A Brahmin scholar was usually appointed for the ritualistic rendering of the epic. This Brahmin was referred to as ***Mavaratha Pattar or Mahabharata Bhattar*** and he was seated on the north-east side of the sanctum. The recital was for the general well being of all these who listened to it. But strange are the changes brought upon customs and rituals, by the passing of time. Today reading aloud the epic battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas is considered inauspicious in temples and households. The Ramayana, Narayaneeyam by ***Melpathoor Narayana Bhattathiri*** and **Bhagavatham** are the preferred sacred texts for daily rendering today.

In the 14th century in the Malayalam poem ***Unni Neeli Sandesham*** the poet while describing the route to reach his beloved, makes a mention of the unmistakable loud reading of the Mahabharata that he is likely to hear from way side temples, as he travels to his destination.

One of the poet laureates of Mahodayapuram, Vasudeva Bhattathiri who wrote the Sanskrit poem, ***Yudhishtira Vijayam*** based on the Mahabharatha was a customary Mahabharatha Bhattar according to literary historians.

One of the many underground vaults of the renowned Sri Padmanabha Swami temple is known even today as ***Bharatakonathu Kallara*** implying the close proximity of the vault to the place from where the person appointed to read the Mahabharatham usually sat. But today, even here it is the Ramayana that is now read aloud daily.

Koodiyattom and Kathakali artistes and the aforesaid community of Mahabharatha Bhattars were largely responsible for the popular adaptations of the stories from the epic and their subsequent depiction in the wall paintings and sculptures of Kerala temples. The 16th century poet, ***Thunchathu Ezhuthachan's Mahabharatham Kilippattu*** is also another immortal work which brought out the spiritual relevance of the Mahabharatha story.

The popular repertoire of Kathakali or attakathas included the works of many famous names. Kottayam Thampuran's ***Kalyana Sougandhikam, Kalakeya vadham and Kirmeera Vadham; Unnai warrier's Nalacharitam Irayimman Thampi's Uttara Swayamvaram and Keechaka Vadham are all from Mahabharatha.*** Similarly Kootiyam also has a very popular text from the same source, King Kulasekhara's ***Subhadra Dhanamjayam***.

The inimitable social satirist Kunchan Nambiar also has a masterpiece Thullal text based on the Kalyana Sougandhikam story, besides numerous other popular compositions like Hudumbi vadham, Nivaatakavacha vadham, ***Panchali swayamvaram, Keechakavadham*** and ***Sabha pravesam*** which reveal an in-depth understanding of the immortal epic. ***Shakuntalam*** immortalized by Kalidasa is also another favourite story from the ***Mahabharatha*** for poets and playwrights S.Parameswara Iyer Karnan and Bheema are two great Mahabharatha protagonists very dear to the creative writers of Kerala. The critique of Karna's life and fate by ***Ulloor S.Parameswara Iyer , Kuttikrishna Marar and P.K. Balakrishnan*** created ever widening ripples in the intellectual circles. The sidelining of Bheema was sympathetically portrayed by ***M.T. Vasudevan Nair***, in his Jnanapeetam award – winning novel, ***RANDAMOOZHAM.***

Sculptural art deployed dramatic themes like the ***Kirata Arjuneeyam*** story on wooden brackets supporting the roof of the sanctums or Namaskara mandapams in temples. Excellent workmanship of this can still be found in many temples of Kerala in places like ***Kaviyoor, Kadavalloor, Kottakkal, Payyannoor***, ***Peruvanam and Triperumthura***. The whole narrative is portrayed inclusively in either 9 or 12 brackets by the sculptors. Another noteworthy feature was the adoption of this in both Saiva and Vishnu temples, a clear indication that Kerala's Namboothiri Brahmins were a tolerant group who were neither hardcore Saivaites or Vaishnavites.

Muralists also have taken the ***Kiratarjuneeyam*** story for their subject matter. ***Chemmanthitta Siva temple in Thrissur*** has some of the oldest paintings of this narrative, though we have no details about the painters or the dates. A comparison of this with few paintings in Mattancheri palace (Koveni thalam paintings) reveal a stylistic similarity and hence it can be concluded that both might have been done in the second half of the 16th century. A show of valour, a sense of wonder and a depiction of fear are some of the aesthetic emotions conveyed through these paintings. The detailed depiction of a forest is another outstanding feature of these murals. Ochre red, ochre Yellow, green, white and black are the colours from natural pigments that have gone into the creation of these paintings.

Sculptors also took up ***Draupadi Swayamvaram*** as well as the heroic and adventurous exploits of Bheema to create splendid works of art in wood. In temples at Kaviyoor, ***Vazhappalli and Vettikulangara***, the shyness and sense of amazement of the Princess of Paanchala desam at Arjuna's valour and mastery over archery are beautifully executed In ***Poovapuzha temple***, the encounter between Bheema and Bhagadatta and the confrontation of Bheema with Dushasana in Kaviyoor temple are noteworthy for the accuracy of narrative details. The serenity on the face of Bheeshma even as he lies on the bed of arrows, is beautifully captured in the sculptures at ***Vadakkumnatha temple*** in Thrissur and ***Chuduvalathoor temple in Shornur.***

In the Sankara Narayana shrine at ***Vadakumnatha temple*** the Kurukshetra war is depicted in all its intensity, magnitude and devastation. From an inscription in the temple we get relevant information about the painter and the person who commissioned him to create it. The painters are named as Krishnan and his disciple. The mural was done on the instruction of Azhvancheri Thamprakkal in 1731, September 23 to convey an overt message to the warring factions of Cochin Royal family for the throne.

Certainly the mural depicting the death of Abhimanyu and the three grieving ladies stand out for its artistic excellence. Kunti, Draupadi and Uttara portray different shades of the same devastating loss. Here Naatya dharmi and lokha dharmi have come together. King Pandu's death is another theme depicted in Elamkunnapuzha temple in Kochi .

Incidentally the ownership of ***Elamkunnapuzha temple*** was in dispute between ***Kochi and Travancore*** in nineteenth century. Adhering to Truth and righteousness have always been considered as the most desirable qualities for human excellence. And upholding them even in times of adverse circumstances is undoubtedly difficult but certainly one's dharma. Perhaps the Murals and sculptures based on Mahabharata remind this fact to the temple devotees. ❑

Unique devotional service rendered by Bhisṁadeva

—Stoka Krishna Maharaj

Devavrata had sacrificed his rightful claim over the kingdom and pleasures of married life for the sake of pleasing his father Çäntanu. Being pleased by the vow taken by his son Devavrata, Çäntanu blessed him with *icchä maraṇa*, a blessing that enabled Devavrata to give up his body whenever he desired. From then on Devavrata became famously known as Bhismadeva because of the severe vow of lifelong celibacy. He was a self-realized devotee, a *mahäjana* (or authority) on par with the great demigods like Brahmä, Närada and Çiva because of his spiritual perfection. He was famous throughout the universe and was respected by all.

Devavrata was born in the Kuru dynasty as the son of Çäntanu and mother Gaìgä. On the request of Çäntanu, he was reared carefully by mother Gaìgä in the celestial regions. When he became a young man, Gaìgä brought him back to earth and handed him over to Çäntanu. The king took Devavrata to the city and declared him to be the crown prince of his kingdom. Instructed by Rsis such as Vasiñöa, Çukra and Paraçurëma, Devavrata was proficient in all aspects of Vedic knowledge and was expert in arms and warfare.

Devavrata makes a severe vow to remain a lifelong celibate

Çäntanu was attracted by Satyavaté who was the daughter of a fisherman. Çäntanu approached the fisherman and requested him to hand over his daughter to him in marriage. Knowing well that Çäntanu was married and had a grownup son, the fisherman refused the proposal of Çäntanu because he wanted the children of his daughter to become the rulers of the kingdom. Çäntanu was despondent because of the fisherman's refusal. Understanding the reason of Çäntanu's despondency, Devavrata approached the fisherman and took a vow to remain a lifelong celibate and requested him to hand over his daughter Satyavaté to Çäntanu in marriage. The fisherman was pleased and handed over Satyavaté in marriage to Çäntanu. Devavrata had sacrificed his rightful claim over the kingdom and pleasures of married life for the sake of pleasing his father Çäntanu. Being pleased by the vow taken by his son Devavrata, Çäntanu blessed him with *icchä maraṇa*, a blessing that enabled Devavrata to give up his body whenever he desired. From then on Devavrata became famously known as Bhismadeva because of the severe vow of lifelong celibacy. He was a self-realized devotee, a *mahäjana* (or authority) on par with the great demigods like Brahmä, Närada and Çiva because of his spiritual perfection. He was famous throughout the universe and was respected by all.

Bhismadeva cares for the Päëòavas

Bhismadeva was not only a great family head of the Kuru dynasty, but also was a great philosopher and friend to the Päëòavas and their mother Kuntédevé. Since Mahäräja Päëòu, the father of the five brothers headed by Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira, had died, Bhismadeva was the most affectionate grandfather of the Päëòavas and caretaker of the widow daughter-in-law Kuntédevé. Although Mahäräja Dhåtaräñöra, the elder uncle of Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira, was there to look after them, Mahäräja Dhåtaräñöra's affection was more on the side of his hundred sons, headed by Duryodhana. A colossal clique was fabricated to deprive the five fatherless brothers of their rightful claim of the kingdom of Hastinäpura. There was great intrigue, common in imperial palaces, and the five brothers were exiled to the wilderness. But Bhéñmadeva was always a sincerely sympathetic well-wisher, grandfather, friend and philosopher to Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira, even up to the last moment of his life.

Upon returning from exile, the Päëòavas rightfully requested their kingdom from Duryodhana, who bluntly refused to yield it. Duty-bound as princes to serve in public administration, the five Päëòavas reduced their request to a mere five villages. But Duryodhana arrogantly replied that he wouldn't spare them enough land into which to drive a pin.

Even a fighter like Bhisma cannot win on the wrong side.

Throughout all this, the Päëòavas had been consistently tolerant and forbearing. But now war seemed inevitable. Bhismadeva was not at all satisfied to fight against the Päëòavas, who were his beloved fatherless grandchildren. But the kñatriyas are also very stern people, and therefore he was obliged to take the side of Duryodhana because he was maintained at the expense of Duryodhana.

Bhisma could not win the Battle of Kurukñetra because the Lord wanted to show that vice cannot conquer virtue, regardless of who tries to execute it. Bhismadeva was a great devotee of the Lord, but he chose to fight against the Päëòavas by the will of the Lord because the Lord wanted to show that a fighter like Bhisma cannot win on the wrong side.

The Lord desired that King Yudhiñöhira be pacified by the words of Bhismadeva.

The pious King Yudhiñöhira was mortified because of the mass massacre of human beings in the Battle of Kurukñetra, especially on his account. This mass killing simply to enthrone Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira was too mortifying. Great sages like Vyäsa and the Lord Himself tried to convince Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira with evidences from histories that the fight was just because the cause was just. But Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira would not be satisfied, even though he was instructed by the greatest personalities of the time. Kåñëa is the performer of superhuman actions, but in this particular instance neither He nor Vyäsa could convince King Yudhiñöhira. Does it mean that Kåñëa failed to be a superhuman actor? No, certainly not. The interpretation is that the Lord as *éçvara*, or the Supersoul in the hearts of both King Yudhiñöhira and Vyäsa, performed still more superhuman action because the Lord desired it. As Supersoul of King Yudhiñöhira, He did not allow the King to be convinced by the words of Vyäsa and others, including Himself, because He desired that the King hear instructions from the dying Bhismadeva, who was another great devotee of the Lord. The Lord wanted that at the last stage of his material existence the great warrior Bhismadeva see Him personally and see his beloved grandchildren, King Yudhiñöhira, etc., now situated on the throne, and thus pass away very peacefully.

Besides this, the Lord also desired that King Yudhiñöhira be pacified by the words of Bhismadeva so that the world could see that Bhismadeva excelled all in knowledge, including the Lord Himself.

Being afraid for having killed so many subjects on the Battlefield of Kurukñetra, Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira went to the scene of the massacre. There, Bhéñmadeva was lying on a bed of arrows, about to pass away. He was endowed with the power of leaving his material body at will, and his lying down on the bed of arrows was his own choice.

At that time all brothers of Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira followed him on beautiful chariots drawn by first-class horses decorated with gold ornaments. With them were Vyäsa and åñis like Dhaumya [the learned priest of the Päëòavas] and others. Lord Çré Kåñëa, the Personality of Godhead, also followed, seated on a chariot with Arjuna. Thus King Yudhiñöhira appeared very aristocratic, like Kubera surrounded by his companions [the Guhyakas].

Seeing Bhismadeva lying on the ground, like a demigod fallen from the sky, the Päëòava King Yudhiñöhira, along with his younger brothers and Lord Kåñëa, bowed down before him. Just to see the chief of the descendants of King Bharata [Bhéñma], all the great souls in the universe, namely the åñis amongst the demigods, brähmaëas and kings, all situated in the quality of goodness, were assembled there. Bhismadeva himself was also one of the brahmarñis and the chief of the descendants of King Bharata. All åñis are situated in the quality of goodness. All of them assembled there on hearing the news of the great warrior's impending death.

Bhismadeva, who was the best amongst the eight Vasus, received and welcomed all the great and powerful åñis who were assembled there, for he knew perfectly all the religious principles according to time and place. Bhismadeva was one of the twelve great authorities in preaching the cult of devotional service, and therefore he could receive and welcome all the powerful sages assembled there at his deathbed from all parts of the universe. He was certainly unable at that time to welcome and receive them physically because he was neither at his home nor in a normal healthy condition. But he was quite fit by the activities of his sound mind, and therefore he could utter sweet words with hearty expressions, and all of them were well received.

Lord Çré Kåñëa is situated in everyone's heart, yet He manifests His transcendental form by His internal potency. This very Lord was sitting before Bhismadeva, and since Bhismadeva knew of His glories, he worshiped Him duly.

The sons of Mahäräja Päëòu were sitting silently nearby, overtaken with affection for their dying grandfather. Seeing this, Bhismadeva congratulated them with feeling. There were tears of ecstasy in his eyes, for he was overwhelmed by love and affection.

Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira was disturbed due to the great massacre in the Battle of Kurukñetra. Bhismadeva could understand this, and therefore he spoke first of the terrible sufferings of Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira. Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira was put into difficulty by injustice only, and the Battle of Kurukñetra was fought just to counteract this injustice. Therefore, Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira should not regret the great massacre. Bhismadeva wanted to point out particularly that the Päëòavas were always protected by the brähmaëas, the Lord and religious principles. As long as they were protected by these three important items, there was no cause of disappointment. Thus Bhismadeva encouraged Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira to dissipate his despondency. As long as a person is fully in cooperation with the wishes of the Lord, guided by the bona fide brähmaëas and Vaiñëavas and strictly following religious principles, one has no cause for despondency, however trying the circumstances of life. Bhismadeva, as one of the authorities in the line, wanted to impress this point upon the Päëòavas.

Bhisma wanted to impress upon Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira that since time immemorial no one, including such demigods as Çiva and Brahmä, could ascertain the real plan of the Lord. So what can we understand about it? It is useless also to inquire about it. Even the exhaustive philosophical inquiries of sages cannot ascertain the plan of the Lord. The best policy is simply to abide by the orders of the Lord without argument. The sufferings of the Päëòavas were never due to their past deeds. The Lord had to execute the plan of establishing the kingdom of virtue, and therefore His own devotees suffered temporarily in order to establish the conquest of virtue. Bhismadeva was certainly satisfied by seeing the triumph of virtue, and he was glad to see King Yudhiñöhira on the throne, although Bhismadeva himself fought against Yudhiñöhira.

Lord Çré Kåñëa wanted to prove that His pure devotees are always sound in body and mind.

Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira was inspired by Lord Çré Kåñëa to ask Bhéñmadeva of the principles of religion in the presence of many great sages, indicating thereby that the Lord's devotee like Bhismadeva, although apparently living as a worldly man, is far superior to many great sages, even Vyäsadeva. Another point is that Bhismadeva at that time was not only lying on a deathbed of arrows, but was greatly aggrieved because of that state. One should not have asked him any question at that time, but Lord Çré Kåñëa wanted to prove that His pure devotees are always sound in body and mind by dint of spiritual enlightenment, and thus in any circumstances a devotee of the Lord is in perfect order to speak of the right way of life. Yudhiñöhira also preferred to solve his problematic questions by asking Bhismadeva rather than ask anyone else present there who was seemingly more learned than Bhismadeva. This is all due to the arrangement of the great wheel-carrier Lord Çré Kåñëa, who establishes the glories of His devotee. The father likes to see the son become more famous than himself. The Lord declares very emphatically that worship of His devotee is more valuable than the worship of the Lord Himself.

Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira, after hearing Bhismadeva speak in that appealing tone, asked him, in the presence of all the great åñis, about the essential principles of various religious duties.

At Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira's inquiry, Bhéñmadeva first defined all the classifications of castes and orders of life in terms of the individual's qualifications. Then he systematically, in twofold divisions, described counteraction by detachment and interaction by attachment.

Bhismadeva sets an example concerning the important function of the human form of life.

While Bhismadeva was describing occupational duties, the sun's course ran into the northern hemisphere. This period is desired by mystics who die at their will. Bhismadeva knew well how to utilize it. He was just waiting for the suitable moment to quit his material body, and the golden opportunity arrived when he was instructing his noble grandsons, the Päëòavas. He thus prepared himself to quit his body before the exalted Lord Çré Kåñëa, the pious Päëòavas and the great sages headed by Bhagavän Vyäsa, etc., all great souls.

Thereupon that man who spoke on different subjects with thousands of meanings and who fought on thousands of battlefields and protected thousands of men, stopped speaking and, being completely freed from all bondage, withdrew his mind from everything else and fixed his wide-open eyes upon the original Personality of Godhead, Çré Kåñëa, who stood before him, four-handed, dressed in yellow garments that glittered and shined.

In the momentous hour of leaving his material body, Bhismadeva set the glorious example concerning the important function of the human form of life. The subject matter which attracts the dying man becomes the beginning of his next life. Therefore, if one is absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme Lord Çré Kåñëa, he is sure to go back to Godhead without any doubt.

Bhismadeva wanted to see Çré Kåñëa for a long time out of his spontaneous love for Him. Because he was a pure devotee, he had very little to do with the detailed performance of yogic principles. Simple *bhakti-yoga* is enough to bring about perfection. Therefore, the ardent desire of Bhismadeva was to see the person of Lord Kåñëa, the most lovable object, and by the grace of the Lord, Çré Bhismadeva had this opportunity at the last stage of his breathing.

By pure meditation, looking at Lord Çré Kåñëa, he at once was freed from all material inauspiciousness and was relieved of all bodily pains caused by the arrow wounds. Thus all the external activities of his senses at once stopped, and he prayed transcendentally to the controller of all living beings while quitting his material body. Çré Bhismadeva offered his prayers to Lord Kåñëa.

Bhismadeva's prayers from Mahäbhärata

The prayers offered by Bhismadeva are described in the Anuçäna Parva of the Mahäbhärata.
Bhisma Svargäroha Parva Chapter 273

bhisma uväca
bhagavan-deva-deveça suräsuranamaskåta |
trivikrama namastubhyaà çaïkhacakragadädhara ||

Bhishma Said: O Supreme Personality of Godhead, you are the Supreme Lord of all the demigods. You are worshipped by all the demigods and demons. O Trivikrama, whose three gigantic steps took the three worlds from Bali, O wielder of the conch, the disc, and the mace, I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

väsudevo hiraëyätmä puruñaù savitä viräö |
jévabhüto 'nurüpastvaà paramätmä sanätanaù ||

O son of Vasudeva, you possess a golden body, you are the Supreme Person, you are the gigantic universal form. You are the Super soul, the chief eternal among all the eternal living beings.

tvadbhktaà tvdgatià çäntamudäramaprigraham|
träyasva puëòrékäkça puruñottama nityaçaù ||

O Supreme Personaity of Godhead, you possess eyes as beautiful as lotus petals, kindly accept me as your devotee and deliver me by giving shelter at your lotus feet which is the supreme abode of eternal peace.

anujänéhi mäà kåñëa vaikuëöha puruñottama|
rakçyäçca te päëòaveyä bhavänyeñäà paräyaëam||

Do give me permission, O Kåñëa , O the Lord of the spiritual sky, O Supreme Personality of Godhead. Please protect the Päëòavas and all the other devotees who are dependent upon you.

uktavänasmi durbandhdià mandaà duryodhanaà tadä |
yataù kåñëastato dharmo yato dharmastato jayaù||

Formerly, I spoke to the foolish Duryodhana of wicked understanding that righteousness is there where Kåñëa is there, and where people are righteous, there is victory.

väsudevena téthena putra saàçämya päëòavaiù|
sandhänasya paraù kälastaveti ca punaù punaù||

I further counselled him that relying on Väsudeva as his refuge, he should make peace with the Pandavas. Indeed, I repeatedly told him, 'This is the fittest time for you to make peace!'.

na ca me tadvaco müòhaù kåtavänsa sumandadhéù |
ghätayitveha påthivéà tataù sa nidhanaà gataù ||

The foolish Duryodhana of wicked understanding, however, did not do my bidding. Having caused a great havoc on earth, at last, he himself laid down his life.

tväà tu jänämyahaà devaà puräëamåñisattamaà |
nareëa sahitaà deva badaryo suciroñitam||

I know you to be the Lord who is the oldest and best of Rishis who dwelt for many years in the company of Nara, in the Badarikäçrama.

tathä me näradaù präha vyäsaçca sumahätapäù |
naranäräyaëävetau saàbhutau manujeñviti ||

The celestial Rishi Narada told me this, as also Vyasa of austere penances. Even they have said unto me that Yourself and Arjuna are the same old Rishis Narayana and Nara born among men.

sa mäà tvamanujänéhi kåñëa mokçye kalevaram |
tvayä 'haà samujïäto gaccheyaà paramäà gatim ||

O Kåñëa , grant me leave, I shall cast off my body. Permitted by you, I shall attain to the highest destination.

väsudeva uväca
anujänämi bhéñma tväà vasünapnuhi pärthiva |
na te'sti våjinaà kiïcicchuddhätmaiçvryasaàyutaù ||
ptåbhaktosi räjarñe märkaëòeya iväparaù |
tena måtyustva vaçe sthito bhåtya ivänataù ||

Väsudeva said, 'I give you permission, O Bhishma! O king, you will attain to the status of the Vasus of great splendor. You have not been guilty of a single transgression in this world. O royal sage, you are devoted to thy sire. You are, therefore, like second Markandeya! It is for that reason that death depends upon your pleasure as your slave waiting to do anything for your pleasure!'

Bhismadeva's prayers from Çrémad-Bhägavatam

Garuòa Puräëa states:

artho 'yaà brahma-süträëäà bhäratärtha-vinirëayaù
gäyatré-bhäñya-rüpo 'sau vedärtha-paribåàhitaù
puräëänäà säma-rüpaù säkñäd-bhagavatoditaù
dvädaça-skandha-yukto 'yaà çata-viccheda-saàyutaù
grantho 'ñöädaça-sähasraù çrémad-bhägavatäbhidhaù

'The meaning of the Vedänta-sütra is present in Çrémad-Bhägavatam. The full purport of the Mahäbhärata is also there. The commentary of the Brahma-gäyatré is also there and fully expanded with all Vedic knowledge. Çrémad-Bhägavatam is the supreme Puräëa, and it was compiled by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Vyäsadeva. There are twelve cantos, 335 chapters and eighteen thousand verses.'

Since Çrémad-Bhägavatam gives the full purport of the Mahäbhärata as mentioned in the Garuòa purana, to understand Bhismadeva's pure devotion, we will refer to the prayers of Bhismadeva from Çrémad-Bhägavatam canto one chapter nine.

Bhismadeva was a statesman, the head of the Kuru dynasty, a great general and a leader of kñatriyas, hence his mind was strewn over so many subjects, and his thinking, feeling and willing were engaged in different matters. Now, in order to achieve pure devotional service, he wanted to invest all powers of thinking, feeling and willing entirely in the Supreme Being, Lord Kåñëa.

Pure devotees of the Lord have no desire other than the service of the Lord, and therefore they are called *sätvata*. The Lord is the chief amongst such *sätvatas*. Bhismadeva wants to invest his thinking, feeling and willing in the all-powerful Lord Çré Kåñëa who is the leader of the devotees. Bhishma deva prays:

çré-bhéñma uväca
iti matir upakalpitä vitåñëä bhagavati sätvata-puìgave
vibhümni
sva-sukham upagate kvacid vihartuà prakåtim upeyuñi
yad-bhava-pravähaù

'Bhismadeva said: Let me now invest my thinking, feeling and willing, which were so long engaged in different subjects and occupational duties, in the all-powerful Lord Çré Kåñëa. He is always self-satisfied, but sometimes, being the leader of the devotees, He enjoys transcendental pleasure by descending on the material world, although from Him only the material world is created.' SB 1.9.32

Although Lord Kåñëa is the original Personality of Godhead, He Himself descends on earth to bestow upon His pure devotees the boon of devotional service. He descends sometimes as Lord Kåñëa as He is, and sometimes as Lord Caitanya. Both are leaders of the pure devotees. Hence Bhismadeva describes the Lord as *sätvata-puìgave*—unto the leader of the devotees. Unless one is purified from all sorts of material desires, the Lord does not become one's leader. Bhismadeva, therefore, had no other desires. Desires cannot be wiped out, but they have only to be purified. It is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gétä by the Lord Himself that He gives His instruction from within the heart of a pure devotee who is constantly engaged in the service of the Lord. Such instruction is given not for any material purpose but only for going back home, back to Godhead (Bg. 10.10).

teñäà satata-yuktänäà bhajatäà préti-pürvakam
dadämi buddhi-yogaà taà yena mäm upayänti te

'To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.' BG 10.10

Lord Kåñëa also says in the Bhagavad gita 8.5
anta-käle ca mäm eva smaran muktvä kalevaram
yaù prayäti sa mad-bhävaà yäti nästy atra saàçayaù

'And whoever, at the time of death, quits his body, remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.' BG 8.5

Bhismadeva wanted to fixup his mind on Lord Sri Kåñëa at the time of his death. He remembers the transcendental beauty of Lord Kåñëa in the battlefield of Kurukñetra.

Bhismadeva remembers the particular dress of Lord Kåñëa which He was wearing as Arjuna's chariot driver. While fighting was going on between Arjuna and Bhéñma, Bhéñma's attraction was drawn by the glittering dress of Kåñëa, and indirectly he admired his so-called enemy Arjuna for possessing the Lord as his friend. Arjuna was always a conqueror because the Lord was his friend. Bhismadeva takes this opportunity to address the Lord as *vijaya-sakhe* (friend of Arjuna) because the Lord is pleased when He is addressed conjointly with His devotees, who are related with Him in different transcendental humors.

Bhismadeva prays:
tri-bhuvana-kamanaà tamäla-varëaà ravi-kara-gaura-
varämbaraà dadhäne
vapur alaka-kulävåtänanäbjaà vijaya-sakhe ratir astu me
'navadyä

'Çré Kåñëa is the intimate friend of Arjuna. He has appeared on this earth in His transcendental body, which resembles the bluish color of the tamäla tree. His body attracts everyone in the three planetary systems [upper, middle and lower]. May His glittering yellow dress and His lotus face, covered with paintings of sandalwood pulp, be the object of my attraction, and may I not desire fruitive results.' SB 1.9.33

Arjuna is described here as the conqueror, and Kåñëa is described as his intimate friend.

While Kåñëa was the charioteer of Arjuna, sun rays glittered on the dress of the Lord, and the beautiful hue created by the reflection of such rays was never forgotten by Bhismadeva. As a great fighter he was relishing the relation of Kåñëa in the chivalrous humor.

While fighting with Arjuna, Bhismadeva had shot many arrows on the Lord causing many wounds on the body of the Lord. This was greatly pleasing the Lord. Bhismadeva meditates on Lord Kåñëa and recalls that particular scene and prays:

yudhi turaga-rajo-vidhümra-viñvak-kaca-lulita-
çramaväry-alaìkåtäsye
mama niçita-çarair vibhidyamäna-tvaci vilasat-kavace
'stu kåñëa ätmä

'On the battlefield [where Çré Kåñëa attended Arjuna out of friendship], the flowing hair of Lord Kåñëa turned ashen due to the dust raised by the hoofs of the horses. And because of His labor, beads of sweat wetted His face. All these decorations, intensified by the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows, were enjoyed by Him. Let my mind thus go unto Çré Kåñëa.' SB 1.9.34

Çré Bhismadeva is a great devotee of the Lord in the relation of servitorship. Thus his throwing of sharp arrows at the transcendental body of the Lord is as good as the worship of another devotee who throws soft roses upon Him.

It appears that Bhismadeva is repenting the actions he committed against the person of the Lord. But factually the Lord's body was not at all pained, due to His transcendental existence. His body is not matter. Both He Himself and His body are complete spiritual identity. Spirit is never pierced, burnt, dried, moistened, etc. This is vividly explained in the Bhagavad-gétä. So also it is stated in the Skanda Puräëa. It is said there that spirit is always uncontaminated and indestructible. It cannot be distressed, nor can it be dried up. When Lord Viñëu in His incarnation appears before us, He seems to be like one of the conditioned souls, materially encaged, just to bewilder the *asuras*, or the nonbelievers, who are always alert to kill the Lord, even from the very beginning of His appearance. Kaàsa wanted to kill Kåñëa, and Rävaëa wanted to kill Räma, because foolishly they were unaware of the fact that the Lord is never killed, for the spirit is never annihilated.

Therefore Bhismadeva's piercing of the body of Lord Kåñëa is a sort of bewildering problem for the nondevotee atheist, but those who are devotees, or liberated souls, are not bewildered.

Bhismadeva appreciated the all-merciful attitude of the Lord because He did not leave Arjuna alone, although He was disturbed by the sharpened arrows of Bhismadeva, nor was He reluctant to come before Bhisma's deathbed, even though He was ill-treated by him on the battlefield. Bhisma's repentance and the Lord's merciful attitude are both unique in this picture.

The fighting was an exchange of transcendental pleasure between the Lord and His pure devotee, Çré Bhismadeva, was not at all mundane. Since the Lord's body and the Lord are identical, there was no possibility of wounds in the absolute body. The word *vibhidyamäna* is significant because the Lord's skin is not different from the Lord. Because our skin is different from our soul, in our case the word *vibhidyamäna*, or being bruised and cut, would have been quite suitable. Transcendental bliss is of different varieties, and the variety of activities in the mundane world is but a perverted reflection of transcendental bliss. Because everything in the mundane world is qualitatively mundane, it is full of inebrieties, whereas in the absolute realm, because everything is of the same absolute nature, there are varieties of enjoyment without inebriety. The Lord enjoyed the wounds created by His great devotee Bhismadeva, and because Bhismadeva is a devotee in the chivalrous relation, he fixes up his mind on Kåñëa in that wounded condition. He further remembers how the Lord carried out the order of Arjuna and placed the chariot in between both the armies.

sapadi sakhi-vaco niçamya madhye nija-parayor balayo
rathaà niveçya
sthitavati para-sainikäyur akñëä håtavati pärtha-sakhe
ratir mamästu

'In obedience to the command of His friend, Lord Çré Kåñëa entered the arena of the Battlefield of Kurukñetra between the soldiers of Arjuna and Duryodhana, and while there He shortened the life spans of the opposite party by His merciful glance. This was done simply by His looking at the enemy. Let my mind be fixed upon that Kåñëa.' SB 1.9.35

Looking at the eagerness with which everyone had assembled, Arjuna was grief stricken due to compassion. He wanted to give up the fight and take up the profession of begging. The Lord dispelled Arjuna's ignorance by enlightening him by delivering the Bhagavad Gita. Bhismadeva recalls this and prays:

vyavahita-påtanä-mukhaà nirékñya sva-jana-vadhäd
vimukhasya doña-buddhyä
kumatim aharad ätma-vidyayä yaç caraëa-ratiù
paramasya tasya me 'stu

'When Arjuna was seemingly polluted by ignorance upon observing the soldiers and commanders before him on the battlefield, the Lord eradicated his ignorance by delivering transcendental knowledge. May His lotus feet always remain the object of my attraction.' SB 1.9.36

The Battle of Kurukñetra was fought on military principles but at the same time in a sporting spirit, like a friend's fight with another friend. Duryodhana criticized Bhismadeva, alleging that he was reluctant to kill Arjuna because of paternal affection. A kñatriya cannot tolerate insults on the principle of fighting. Bhismadeva therefore promised that the next day he would kill all five Päëòavas with special weapons made for the purpose. Duryodhana was satisfied, and he kept the arrows with him to be delivered the next day during the fight. By tricks Arjuna took the arrows from Duryodhana, and Bhismadeva could understand that this was the trick of Lord Kåñëa. So he took a vow that the next day Kåñëa would have to take up weapons Himself, otherwise His friend Arjuna would die. In the next day's fighting Bhismadeva fought so violently that both Arjuna and Kåñëa were in trouble. Arjuna was almost defeated; the situation was so tense that he was about to be killed by Bhismadeva the very next moment. At that time Lord Kåñëa wanted to please His devotee, Bhisma, by keeping Bhisma's promise, which was more important than His own. Seemingly He broke His own promise. He promised before the beginning of the Battle of Kurukñetra that He would remain without weapons and would not use His strength for either of the parties. But to protect Arjuna He got down from the chariot, took up the wheel of the chariot and hurriedly rushed at Bhismadeva in an angry mood, as a lion goes to kill an elephant. He dropped His covering cloth on the way, and out of great anger He did not know that He had dropped it. Bhismadeva at once gave up his weapons and stood to be killed by Kåñëa, his beloved Lord. The fighting of the day was thus ended at that very moment, and Arjuna was saved. Of course there was no possibility of Arjuna's death because the Lord Himself was on the chariot, but because Bhismadeva wanted to see Lord Kåñëa take up some weapon to save His friend, the Lord created this situation, making Arjuna's death imminent. He stood before Bhismadeva to show him that his promise was fulfilled and that He had taken up the wheel. Recalling this incident, Bhismadeva prays:

sva-nigamam apahäya mat-pratijïäm åtam adhikartum
avapluto rathasthaù
dhåta-ratha-caraëo 'bhyayäc caladgur harir iva hantum
ibhaà gatottaréyaù

'Fulfilling my desire and sacrificing His own promise, He got down from the chariot, took up its wheel, and ran towards me hurriedly, just as a lion goes to kill an elephant. He even dropped His outer garment on the way.' SB 1.9.37

The dealings of Lord Kåñëa and Bhismadeva on the Battlefield of Kurukñetra are interesting because the activities of Lord Çré Kåñëa appeared to be partial to Arjuna and at enmity with Bhismadeva; but factually all this was especially meant to show special favor to

Bhismadeva, a great devotee of the Lord. The astounding feature of such dealings is that a devotee can please the Lord by playing the part of an enemy. The Lord, being absolute, can accept service from His pure devotee even in the garb of an enemy. The Supreme Lord cannot have any enemy, nor can a so-called enemy harm Him because He is *ajita*, or unconquerable. But still He takes pleasure when His pure devotee beats Him like an enemy or rebukes Him from a superior position, although no one can be superior to the Lord. These are some of the transcendental reciprocatory dealings of the devotee with the Lord. And those who have no information of pure devotional service cannot penetrate into the mystery of such dealings. Hence Bhismadeva Prays:

çita-viçikha-hato viçérëa-daàçaù kñataja-paripluta
ätatäyino me
prasabham abhisasära mad-vadhärthaà sa bhavatu me
bhagavän gatir mukundaù

'May He, Lord Çré Kåñëa, the Personality of Godhead, who awards salvation, be my ultimate destination. On the battlefield He charged me, as if angry because of the wounds dealt by my sharp arrows. His shield was scattered, and His body was smeared with blood due to the wounds.' SB 1.9.38

Bhismadeva played the part of a valiant warrior, and he purposely pierced the body of the Lord so that to the common eyes it appeared that the Lord was wounded, but factually all this was to bewilder the nondevotees. The all-spiritual body cannot be wounded, and a devotee cannot become the enemy of the Lord. Had it been so, Bhismadeva would not have desired to have the very same Lord as the ultimate destination of his life. Had Bhismadeva been an enemy of the Lord, Lord Kåñëa could have annihilated him without even moving. There was no need to come before Bhismadeva with blood and wounds. But He did so because the warrior devotee wanted to see the transcendental beauty of the Lord decorated with wounds created by a pure devotee. This is the way of exchanging transcendental rasa, or relations between the Lord and the servitor. By such dealings both the Lord and the devotee become glorified in their respective positions. The Lord was so angry that Arjuna checked Him when He was moving towards Bhismadeva, but in spite of Arjuna's checking, He proceeded towards Bhismadeva as a lover goes to a lover, without caring for hindrances. Apparently His determination was to kill Bhismadeva, but factually it was to please him as a great devotee of the Lord. The Lord is undoubtedly the deliverer of all conditioned souls.

A pure devotee of the Lord constantly sees the presence of the Lord within himself because of being transcendentally related by loving service. Such a pure devotee cannot forget the Lord for a moment. This is called trance. Bhismadeva was a pure devotee, and as a military marshal he constantly remembered the battlefield feature of the Lord as Pärtha-särathi, the chariot driver of Arjuna. Therefore, the Lord's pastime as Pärtha-särathi is also eternal. The pastimes of the Lord, beginning from His birth at the prison house of Kaàsa up to the *mausala-lélä* at the end, all move one after another in all the universes, just as the clock hand moves from one point to another. And in such pastimes His associates like the Päëòavas and Bhisma are constant eternal companions.

So Bhismadeva never forgot the beautiful feature of the Lord as Pärtha-särathi, which even Arjuna could not see. Arjuna was behind the beautiful Pärtha-särathi while Bhismadeva was just in front of the Lord. As far as the military feature of the Lord is concerned, Bhismadeva observed this with more relish than Arjuna.

A spiritual form like the Lord's, either two-handed or four-handed, is attained by the devotees of the Lord either in the Vaikuëöhas or in the Goloka planet, according to the original nature of the soul. This form, which is cent percent spiritual, is the *svarüpa* of the living being, and all the living beings who participated on the Battlefield of Kurukñetra, on both sides, attained their *svarüpa*, as confirmed by Bhismadeva. So Lord Çré Kåñëa was not merciful only to the Päëòavas; He was also merciful to the other parties because all of them attained the same result. Bhismadeva wanted the same facility also, and that was his prayer to the Lord, although his position as an associate of the Lord is assured in all circumstances. Bhismadeva prays:

vijaya-ratha-kuöumba ätta-totre dhåta-haya-raçmini
tac-chriyekñaëéye
bhagavati ratir astu me mumürñor yam iha nirékñya hatä
gatäù sva-rüpam

'At the moment of death, let my ultimate attraction be to Çré Kåñëa, the Personality of Godhead. I concentrate my mind upon the chariot driver of Arjuna who stood with a whip in His right hand and a bridle rope in His left, who was very careful to give protection to Arjuna's chariot by all means. Those who saw Him on the Battlefield of Kurukñetra attained their original forms after death.' SB 1.9.39

The relation of the Lord with Arjuna is praiseworthy for devotees like Bhismadeva, but the relation of the gopés with the Lord is still more praiseworthy because of their still more purified loving service. By the grace of the Lord, Arjuna was fortunate enough to have the fraternal service of the Lord as chariot driver, but the Lord did not award Arjuna with equal strength. However, by intense ecstasy in loving service, the damsels of Vrajabhümi attained qualitative oneness with the Lord by dancing with Him on an equal level, embracing Him in nuptial love, smiling at Him in joke, and looking at Him with a loving attitude. The gopés, practically became one with the Lord by attainment of equal footing with the Lord. Bhisma aspired to remember the gopés to have their mercy also at the last stage of his life. The Lord is satisfied more when His pure devotees are glorified, and therefore Bhismadeva not only glorified the acts of Arjuna, his immediate object of attraction, but he also remembers the gopés, who were endowed with unrivalled opportunities by rendering loving service to the Lord as follows:

lalita-gati-viläsa-valguhäsa-praëaya-nirékñaëa-
kalpitorumänäù
kåta-manu-kåta-vatya unmadändhäù prakåtim agan kila
yasya gopa-vadhvaù

'Let my mind be fixed upon Lord Çré Kåñëa, whose motions and smiles of love attracted the damsels of Vrajadhäma [the gopés]. The damsels imitated the characteristic movements of the Lord [after His disappearance from the räsa dance].' SB 1.9.40

Bhismadeva further remembers how Lord Çré Kåñëa was worshiped by one and all as the most exalted Personality of Godhead in the great assembly of Räjasüya-yajïa [sacrifice] performed by Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira:

muni-gaëa-nåpa-varya-saìkule 'ntaù-sadasi yudhiñöhira-
räjasüya eñäm
arhaëam upapeda ékñaëéyo mama dåçi-gocara eña ävir
ätmä

'At the Räjasüya-yajïa [sacrifice] performed by Mahäräja Yudhiñöhira, there was the greatest assembly of all the elite men of the world, the royal and learned orders, and in that great assembly Lord Çré Kåñëa was worshiped by one and all as the most exalted Personality of Godhead. This happened during my presence, and I remembered the incident in order to keep my mind upon the Lord.'
SB 1.9.41
Finally Bhismadeva prays:

tam imam aham ajaà çaréra-bhäjäà hådi hådi
dhiñöhitam ätma-kalpitänäm
pratidåçam iva naikadhärkam ekaà samadhi-gato 'smi
vidhüta-bheda-mohaù

'Now I can meditate with full concentration upon that one Lord, Çré Kåñëa, now present before me because now I have transcended the misconceptions of duality in regard to His presence in everyone's heart, even in the hearts of the mental speculators. He is in everyone's heart. The sun may be perceived differently, but the sun is one.'
SB 1.9.42

The stage attained by Bhismadeva while quitting his material body is called *nirvikalpa-samädhi* because he merged his self into thinking of the Lord and his mind into remembering His different activities. He chanted the glories of the Lord, and by his sight he began to see the Lord personally present before him, and thus all his activities became concentrated upon the Lord without deviation. Süta Gosvämé said:

süta uväca
kåñëa evaà bhagavati mano-väg-dåñöi-våttibhiù
ätmany ätmänam äveçya so 'ntaùçväsa upäramat

'Süta Gosvämé said: Thus Bhismadeva merged himself in the Supersoul, Lord Çré Kåñëa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, with his mind, speech, sight and actions, and thus he became silent, and his breathing stopped.'
SB 1.9.43

sampadyamänam äjïäya bhéñmaà brahmaëi niñkale
sarve babhüvus te tüñëéà vayäàséva dinätyaye

'Knowing that Bhismadeva had merged into the unlimited eternity of the Supreme Absolute, all present there became silent like birds at the end of the day.'
SB 1.9.45

tatra dundubhayo nedur deva-mänava-väditäù
çaçaàsuù sädhavo räjïäà khät petuù puñpa-våñöayaù

'Thereafter, both men and demigods sounded drums in honor, and the honest royal order commenced demonstrations of honor and respect. And from the sky fell showers of flowers.' SB 1.9.45

Conclusion

Bhismadeva, as a pure devotee of the Lord, entered the spiritual realm in one of the Vaikuëöha planets where the

Lord in His eternal form of Pärtha-särathi predominates over the unconditioned living beings who are constantly engaged in the service of the Lord. The love and affection which bind the Lord and devotee are exhibited in the case of Bhismadeva. Bhéñmadeva never forgot the Lord in His transcendental feature as the Pärtha-särathi, and the Lord was present personally before Bhismadeva while he was passing to the transcendental world. That is the highest perfection of life.

Bhismadeva was respected both by the human beings and by the demigods. The human beings live on earth and similar other planets in the Bhür and Bhuvar group of planets, but the demigods live in the Svar, or heavenly planets, and all of them knew Bhismadeva as a great warrior and devotee of the Lord. As a mahäjana (or authority) he was on the level of Brahmä, Närada and Çiva, although he was a human being. Qualification on par with the great demigods is possible only on attainment of spiritual perfection. Thus Bhismadeva was known all over the universe. When the distant planets were informed of the passing away of Bhismadeva, all the inhabitants of the upper planets as well as of the earth dropped showers of flowers to show due respect to the departed great personality. Bhismadeva was unique in his activities, and his passing away to the kingdom of God is also unique.

❑

Message of Ma bha
National Conferenc 2019

Dr. Veni Madhava Shastry, from Dharwad being felicitated by Shri. Pathi Sridhara, Philanthropist while others join

ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಮತ್ತು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗ

—ಎನ್.ಎಸ್. ಶ್ರೀಧರ ಮೂರ್ತಿ

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಇಲ್ಲವೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಗಳನ್ನು ವಸ್ತುವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು ಕಡಿಮೆ.

ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ತೆರೆ ಮೇಲೆ ತಂದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬರಲು 1965ರವರೆಗೆ ಕಾಯ ಬೇಕಾಯಿತು. ಹೀಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಕಳೆದ ಒಂದು ಶತಮಾನದ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಇತಿಹಾಸವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬೀರಿದ ಪ್ರಭಾವ ದೊಡ್ಡದೇ. ಮೂವತ್ತು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕತೆಗಳೂ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ 2322 ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದಿವೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಅದರ ಅಗಾಧತೆ ಅರಿವಾಗಬಲ್ಲದು.

ಭಾರತೀಯ ರಂಗ ಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲಿಂದಲೂ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಪುರಾಣದ ಅದರಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಗಳೇ. ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಇವುಗಳ ಪ್ರಭಾವವನ್ನು ಕಾಣ ಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಇಲ್ಲವೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಗಳನ್ನು ವಸ್ತುವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು ಕಡಿಮೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಎರಡು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿದ್ದವು. ಆಗ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿ ಉತ್ತುಂಗದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿತ್ತು. ಹೊಸ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಸಿನಿಮಾ ಅದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧಿಸ ಬೇಕಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆಗ ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಡೀ ರಾತ್ರಿ ನಾಟಕಗಳು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದವು. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಎದುರಾಗಿ 30–40 ನಿಮಿಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಕಾಲಘಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಸಿನಿಮಾಗಳು ಸ್ಪರ್ಧಿಸುವುದು ಕಷ್ಟವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಎರಡನೆಯದು ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ್ದ ಸಿನಿಮಾಗಳ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ವೆಚ್ಚ ಅಧಿಕವಾಗುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕಥೆಗಳು, ಅದನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ್ದ ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳ ಕಥಾನಕಗಳು ಹೇರಳವಾಗಿ ಬಂದವು. ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ತೆರೆ ಮೇಲೆ ತಂದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬರಲು 1965ರವರೆಗೆ ಕಾಯ ಬೇಕಾಯಿತು. ಹೀಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಕಳೆದ ಒಂದು ಶತಮಾನದ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಇತಿಹಾಸವನ್ನು ಗಮನಿಸಿದರೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬೀರಿದ ಪ್ರಭಾವ ದೊಡ್ಡದೇ. ಮೂವತ್ತು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕತೆಗಳೂ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ 2322 ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದಿವೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಅದರ ಅಗಾಧತೆ ಅರಿವಾಗಬಲ್ಲದು.

ಮೊದಲು ಆಸಕ್ತಿ ತಳೆದವರು ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರೇ

ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ ತೆರೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ತರುವ ಕನಸನ್ನು ಕಂಡವರು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಪಿತಾಮಹರಾದ ದಾದಾ ಸಾಹೇಬ್ ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರೇ! 1910ರ ಡಿಸಂಬರ್ 10 ಒಂದು ಮಹತ್ವದ ದಿನ. ಅಂದು ದಾದಾ ಸಾಹೇಬ್ ಫಾಲ್ಕೆ ಮುಂಬೈನ ಪಿಕ್ಚರ್ ಪ್ಯಾಲೇಸ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿನಿಮಾ ನೋಡಲು ಹೋದರು. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿತವಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದದ್ದು 'ದಿ ಲೈಫ್ ಆಫ್ ಕ್ರೈಸ್ಟ್' ಇದನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆಯೇ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಲೀಲಾ ವಿನೋದಗಳ ಕುರಿತು ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ತಯಾರಿಸಿದರೆ ಹೇಗೆ? ಎಂಬ ಕನಸು ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರನ್ನು ಆವರಿಸಿತು. ಮರುದಿನ ಮಡದಿಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಇನ್ನೊಮ್ಮೆ ಚಿತ್ರ ನೋಡಿದರು. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಲೀಲಾ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ರಚನೆಯಾಗಿಯೇ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿತು. ಆದರೆ ಬಂಡವಾಳ. ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವನ್ನು ಜೀವಮಾನಪೂರ್ತಿ ಕಾಡಿದಂತಹ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಅದು. ಮುಂದೆ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ದೊರಕಿದ ನಂತರ ಕೂಡ ಅದು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಲೀಲಾಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕಾಗುವಷ್ಟಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವಾಗಿ ವಸ್ತುವನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿ 'ರಾಜಾ ಹರಿಶ್ಚಂದ್ರ' ರೂಪಿಸಿದರು. 1913ರ ಮೇ 3ರಂದು ಮುಂಬೈನ ಕಾರೋನೇಷನ್ ಚಿತ್ರಮಂದಿರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತು. ಹೊಸ ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಆರಂಭವಾಯಿತು. ನಾಸಿಕ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರ ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯೇ ಆರಂಭವಾಯಿತು. ನೂರಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ ಹೆಗ್ಗಳಿಕೆ ಅದರದು. ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರಿಂದ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಕನಸು ದೂರವಾಗಲೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. 1918ರ ವೇಳೆಗೆ ಹಣ ಸೇರಿದರೂ ಅದು 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಲೀಲಾ'ಕ್ಕೆ ಸಾಕಾಗುತ್ತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಜನ್ಮ' ಎಂಬ ಅದರ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಎನ್ನಬಹುದಾದ ಕಥಾನಕ ಇಟ್ಟು ಕೊಂಡು ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು. ಅದು ದಾಖಲೆಗಳ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ವಸ್ತುವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ ಮೊದಲ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರ. ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರು ಅದೇ ವರ್ಷ 'ಕಾಲಿಯ ಮರ್ಧನ್' ಎಂಬ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು. ಅದು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕಾಳಿಂಗ ಮರ್ದನದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿತ್ತು. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ಮಗಳು ಮಂದಾಕಿನಿ ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರೇ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಆಕೆ ಹೀಗೆ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಮೊದಲ ಬಾಲನಟಿ ಎನ್ನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡರು.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಮಹತ್ವದ್ದು ಎಂದು ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕರೆಯ ಬಹುದಾದ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿದವರು ಫಾಲ್ಕೆಯವರ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಯೇ ಆದ ಬಾಬೂರಾವ್ ಪೆಯಿಂಟರ್. ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಗೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಾದ ಪರದೆಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಅವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಕಲಾವೃತ್ತಿಯ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಕೊಲ್ಹಾಪುರದಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಕರಾಗಿ ಕೂಡ ಇದ್ದರು. ಖ್ಯಾತ ಗಾಯಕಿ

ತಾನಿಬಾಯಿ ಕಾಗಿಲ್ಕರ್ ನೀಡಿದ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಬಳಸಿ 'ಮಹಾರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ ಫಿಲಂ ಕಂಪನಿ' ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದರು. ಬ್ರಿಟೀಷರನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶವಿಟ್ಟು ಕೊಂಡು ಅವರನ್ನು ಕೌರವರಿಗೆ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ ಹೋರಾಟಗಾರರನ್ನು ಭೀಮನಿಗೆ ಹೋಲಿಸಿ 1918ರಲ್ಲಿ 'ಕೀಚಕ ವಧಾ' ಎಂಬ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು. ಅದು ದೇಶದೆಲ್ಲೆಡೆ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ಹೋರಾಟಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಸ್ಫೂರ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಿತ್ತು. ಇದನ್ನು ಬ್ರಿಟೀಷ್ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ನಿಷೇಧಿಸಿತು. ಆದರೆ ಬಾಬೂರಾವ್ ತಮ್ಮ ಪಟ್ಟು ಬಿಡದೆ ಅದೇ ಸಿನಿಮಾವನ್ನು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿ 'ಸೈರಂಧ್ರಿ'ಎಂಬ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮರು ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಸಿನಿಮಾ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮವನ್ನು ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ಹೋರಾಟಕ್ಕೆ ಬಳಸಿದ್ದನ್ನು ಮೆಚ್ಚಿದ ಲೋಕಮಾನ್ಯ ತಿಲಕರು ಪೆಯಿಂಟರ್ ಅವರಿಗೆ 'ಸಿನಿಮಾ ಕೇಸರಿ' ಎಂಬ ಬಿರುದನ್ನು ನೀಡಿ ಗೌರವಿಸಿದರು.

ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳು ಆರಂಭವಾಗಿದ್ದೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿತ್ರದಿಂದ. ಮದರಾಸಿನ ಆರ್. ನಟರಾಜ ಮೊದಲಿಯರ್ ತಮ್ಮ 'ಇಂಡಿಯನ್ ಫಿಲಂ ಕಂಪನಿ'ಯ ಮೂಲಕ 'ಕೀಚಕ ವಧಾ' ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರು. ಇದು ಬಾಬೂರಾವ್ ಪೆಯಿಂಟರ್ ಅವರ ಚಿತ್ರಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷ ಮೊದಲೇ ಎಂದರೆ 1916ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತ್ತು. ಕಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಭಿನ್ನತೆ ಇತ್ತು. ವಿಶೇಷವೆಂದರೆ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ಸಂಸ್ಕರಣಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ. ಮಲ್ಲೇಶ್ವರಂನ ಹದಿಮೂರನೇ ಕ್ರಾಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಘಟಕ ಇತ್ತು. ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದ ಪ್ರಮುಖರು ಹರಿಶ್ಚಂದ್ರ ಸಖಾರಾಯ್ ಭಾಟ್‌ವೇಡಾಕರ್. ಅವರು ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಇತಿಹಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾವೇದಾದಾ ಎಂದೇ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರು. 1899ರಲ್ಲಿ ದುಬಾರಿ ಬೆಲೆಗೆ ಲಂಡನ್ನಿನ ರಿಲೇ ಸೋದರರ ಕ್ಯಾಮರಾ ಕೊಂಡರು. ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಕುಸ್ತಿ ಪಂದ್ಯವನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿ ಯಶಸ್ಸು ಪಡೆದರು. ನಂತರ ಅವರು ಪ್ರತಿದಿನವೂ ನಡೆವ ಸಾರಸ್ಯಕರ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿ, ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದರು. ಸಾವೇದಾದಾ ಅವರ ಸಾಹಸ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿ ಕಲೆಗಾರಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಮೆಚ್ಚಿದ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಧೀಶ ಜಾನ್‌ಮೂರ್ ಮದ್ರಾಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನಕ್ಕೆ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಅದನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಪ್ರಭಾವಿತರಾದರಲ್ಲಿ ಆರ್. ವೆಂಕಯ್ಯನವರೂ ಒಬ್ಬರು. ತಮ್ಮ ಮಗ ಆರ್. ಪ್ರಕಾಶನನ್ನು ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಜರ್ಮನಿಗೆ ತರಬೇತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕಳುಹಿಸಿದರು. ಆರ್.ಪ್ರಕಾಶ್ ಖ್ಯಾತ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕ ಸಿಸಿಲ್.ಬಿ. ಡಿಮಿಲಿ ಅವರ ಸಹಾಯಕನಾಗಿ ದುಡಿದು ಅನುಭವ ಪಡೆದರು. ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿದ ಮೇಲೆ 'ಭೀಷ್ಮ ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞಾ' (1921) ಎಂಬ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದರು. ಇದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತು ಬಂದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಮೂಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾವೇದಾದ ಅವರೂ ಕೂಡ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಕುರಿತು ಕಥಾಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರ ಇಡೀ ಯೋಜನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆನ್ನುಲುಬಾಗಿ ದುಡಿದಿದ್ದ ಅವರ ತಮ್ಮ ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅಕಾಲ ಮೃತ್ಯುವಿಗೀಡಾದರು. ಇದರಿಂದ ಆತಂಕಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾದ ಸಾವೇದಾದ ಇನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಜೀವನದಲ್ಲಿ ಕ್ಯಾಮರಾ ಮುಟ್ಟುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಪ್ರತಿಜ್ಞೆ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಅವರು ಮತ್ತೆ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿ ಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದು 1956ರಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದ ಭಾರತೀಯ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರದ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಹಬ್ಬದ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ. ಇದರಿಂದ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗ ಅತ್ಯುತ್ತಮವಾಗ ಬಹುದಾಗಿದ್ದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕಳೆದು ಕೊಂಡಿತು. ಮೂಕಿ ಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತು ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಡ್ಯೂಸ್ ಆಫ್ ಡೈಸ್'(1929) ಹಿಮಾಂಶುರಾಯ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕರು. ಫಿರೋಜ್ ಓಸ್ಟನ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಹಿಮಾಂಶುರಾಯ್, ಸೀತಾದೇವಿ, ಮಧು ಬಥನ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ತಾರಾಗಣದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು.

ಮೂಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಕನ್ನಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕರೂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರೆಂದರೆ ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ವೀರಣ್ಣ. ಅವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಿಕ್ಚರ್ಸ್ ಕಾರ್ಪೋರೇಷನ್‌ನಿಂದ ಮೂರು ಮೂಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 'ಹರಿಮಾಯಾ' (1932) ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಶ್ಯಮಂತಕೋಪಾಖ್ಯಾನದ ಆಧಾರದ ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರ. ವೈ.ವಿ. ರಾವ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು (ಜ್ಯೂಲಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯವರ ತಂದೆ) ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನೂ ಅವರೇ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರ ಮಡದಿ ರಾಜಮ್ಮ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಬಿ.ಜಯಮ್ಮನವರು ಜಾಂಬವತಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಶಿವಗಂಗೆ ಬೆಟ್ಟದ ಸುತ್ತಮುತ್ತಲಿನ ಪ್ರದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಹೊರಾಂಗಣ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣ ನಡೆದಿತ್ತು.

ಮಲ್ಲೇಶ್ವರಂನ ಎಚ್.ವಿ.ನಂಜುಂಡಯ್ಯನವರ ಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಒಳಾಂಗಣ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣ. ಚಿತ್ರ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದು ಹಲವರ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆಯಿತು. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಸೂರ್ಯ ಫಿಲಂ ಕಂಪನಿ 1929ರಲ್ಲಿ 'ರಾಧಾಶ್ಯಾಂ' ಎನ್ನುವ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಆಧರಿತ ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಮಧುಸೂಧನ್ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಟ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಬಾಯ, ಕಮಲಾಬಾಯಿ, ಬಾಚು, ರಂಗರಾವ್ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ಮಾತು ಬಂದ ಮೇಲಿನ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು

ಮೂಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ಯುಗ ಮುಗಿದು ಟಾಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ರಾಮಯಣ ಮತ್ತು ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ವಸ್ತುಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತನ್ನು ತುಂಬುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಆರಂಭವಾಯಿತು. ಭಾರತದ ಮೊದಲ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಅಲಂಆರಾ' ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ ಇಂಪೀರಿಯಲ್ ಕಂಪನಿಯೇ ಈ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ಮಾಡಿತು. ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾದ ಮೂರನೇ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರವೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿತ್ತು. 'ದ್ರೌಪದಿ' ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಹೆಸರು. ಇದು ಯಜ್ಞದಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಜನಿಸುವುದರಿಂದ ಹಿಡಿದು ವಸ್ತ್ರಾಪಹರಣದವರೆಗಿನ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿತ್ತು. ನಂತರ ಯುದ್ಧದವರೆಗಿನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಸಾಂಕೇತಿಕವಾಗಿ ಎಂಟು ದೃಶ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಗಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ವಿಶೇಷವೆಂದರೆ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ಎರ್ಮಲೈ ಎನ್ನುವ ಬ್ರಿಟೀಷ್ ಪುರುಷ ಕಲಾವಿದ. ಅವರು ಈ ಪಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲದೆ ಕುಂತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಆಗ ಕಲಾವಿದರ ಕೊರತೆ ಇದ್ದಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇದು ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯವಾಗಿರಬಹುದು. ನಾಟಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪುರುಷರು ಸ್ತ್ರೀ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವುದು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಮುಂದುವರೆದಿತ್ತು. ಖಲೀಲ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಪೃಥ್ವಿರಾಜ್ ಕಪೂರ್ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಭಗವತಿ ಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ಮಿಶ್ರಾ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಹಿಂದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 'ಯಯಾತಿ' (1938) ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟವಾದ ಚಿತ್ರ. ಪಾಂಡವರ ಪೂರ್ವಜರ ಕುರಿತ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಯಾತಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ತೀರದ ಮಾನವನ ದಾಹಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಲಿಸುವ ರೂಪಕದ ಮಾರ್ಗವನ್ನು ಬಳಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಎಂ.ಎಲ್. ಟಂಡನ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಎಂ.ವಿ. ರಾಜಮ್ಮ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಶರ್ಮಿಷ್ಠೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ತೆಲುಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ದೀರ್ಘ ಪರಂಪರೆಯೇ ಇದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ನಾಂದಿ ಹಾಡಿದ್ದು 'ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ವಸ್ತ್ರಾಪಹರಣ'(1936) ಚಿತ್ರ. ಕನ್ನಾಂಬಾ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಅಮೋಘವಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ತಮಿಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಎಂ. ಸೋಮಸುಂದರಂ ಅವರ 'ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯು'(1948)ವಿನಿಂದ ಈ ಪರಂಪರೆ ಗಟ್ಟಿಯಾಯಿತು. ಜ್ಯೂಪಿಟರ್ ಪಿಕ್ಚರ್ಸ್‌ನ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಎಸ್.ಎಂ. ಕುಮಾರನ್ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಿನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಎಂ.ಜಿ. ಆರ್ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಹಿಂದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದ 'ಮಹಾರಥಿ ಕರ್ಣ' (1944) ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಹತ್ವದ ಚಿತ್ರ. ಪೃಥ್ವಿರಾಜ್ ಕಪೂರ್ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಮೋಘವಾಗಿ ಕರ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ಸಂಗೀತದ ರಸಧಾರೆ ಹರಿಸಿದ ಸುಭದ್ರ

ಕನ್ನಡದ ಎರಡನೇ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಭಕ್ತ ಧ್ರುವ' (1934) ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ್ದ ಚಿತ್ರವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಘಟನೆಯನ್ನೇ ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬರುವುದೂ ಕೂಡ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ತೀರಾ ತಡವಾಗಲಿಲ್ಲ. 1937ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡ 'ರಾಜಸೂಯ ಯಾಗ' ಹೀಗೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾದ ಮೊದಲ ಚಿತ್ರ. ಇದು ಕನ್ನಡದ ಏಳನೇ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ ಎನ್ನುವುದರ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯವಾಗಿಯೇ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡ ಮೊದಲ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರ ಎನ್ನುವ ಹೆಗ್ಗಳಿಕೆಯನ್ನೂ ಕೂಡ ಪಡೆದಿದೆ. ಭಕ್ತ ಧ್ರುವ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದ ಕನಕಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಮ್ಮ ಅವರ ಸೋದರ ಪ್ರೊ. ಟಿ. ದ್ವಾರಕಾನಾಥ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಸಾರಿಗೆ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ದಿಗ್ಗಜ ತಿಮ್ಮಮ್ಮನವರು ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕರು. ಆಸ್ಥಾನ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ನಂಜನಗೂಡು ಶ್ರೀಕಂಠ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳದು ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ. ಹೆಸರಾಂತ ಕಲಾವಿದರಾದ ಕೆ.ಆರ್. ಸೀತಾರಾಮ್, ಕೆ.ವಿ. ಅಚ್ಚುತ ರಾವ್, ಚಾಮುಂಡೇಶ್ವರಿ ಕಂಪನಿಯ ಬಸವರಾಜ ಸೋದರರು, ಎಚ್.ಆರ್. ಹನುಮಂತರಾವ್, ಎಂ.ಎನ್. ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರಯ್ಯ ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು ದ್ರೌಪದಿ

ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಟಿ. ಜಯಮ್ಮನವರಿದ್ದರು. ಖಾಂಡವವನ ದಹನ, ಇಂದ್ರಪ್ರಸ್ಥದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ, ರಾಜಸೂಯ ಯಾಗಕ್ಕೆ ಅತಿಥಿಗಳಾಗಿ ಆಗಮಿಸಿದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಿಗೆ ಆಗುವ ಅವಮಾನ, ಇದು ಸ್ಥೂಲವಾಗಿ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವಸ್ತು. ಆಗ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ವೆಚ್ಚ ಮೂವತ್ತು ಸಾವಿರ ರೂಪಾಯಿಗಳು, 14,200 ಅಡಿ ಉದ್ದವಿದ್ದ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂರು ಪ್ರತಿ ತೆಗೆದು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಮತ್ತು ಮೈಸೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಸುಮಾರು ಒಂದು ಲಕ್ಷದ ಹದಿನೆಂಟು ಸಾವಿರ ರೂಪಾಯಿ ಗಳಿಸಿದ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಯಶಸ್ವಿ ಚಿತ್ರ ಎಂದು ಆಗ ಇದು ಅನ್ನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿತ್ತು. 1947ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮರು ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಯಾಗಿ ಆಗಲೂ ಯಶಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಿತು. ಹೀಗಿದ್ದರೂ ಮೈಸೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಇದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ರೂಪುಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ಮೊಟ್ಟ ಮೊದಲ ಸ್ಥಳೀಯ ಸ್ಟುಡಿಯೋ 'ಮೈಸೂರು ಸೌಂಡ್ ಸ್ಟುಡಿಯೋಸ್' ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಚಿತ್ರ ತಮಿಳಿನ 'ನವೀನ ನಿರುಪಮ' ನಂತರ ಮೂರನೇ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ವಾಲ್ಮೀಕಿ' ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಹಂತದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗಲೇ ಮುಚ್ಚಿ ಹೋಯಿತು.

ಮುಂದೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದ ಚಿತ್ರ. 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ ಹಿಂದೆ ಸಾಹಸದ ಕಥೆಯೇ ಇತ್ತು. 1939ರಲ್ಲಿ ಬ್ರಿಟಿಷ್ ಸರ್ಕಾರ 'ಭಾರತದ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ' ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಯುದ್ಧವನ್ನು ಘೋಷಿಸಿತು. ದ್ವಿತೀಯ ಮಹಾಯುದ್ಧದ ಕಾವು ದೇಶವನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಆವರಿಸಿತು. ಸುಭಾಷ್ ಚಂದ್ರ ಬೋಸ್ ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಪರವಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಬ್ರಿಟಿಷರಿಗೆ ಈ ಮಹಾಯುದ್ಧ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಕೂಡ ಆಗಿ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿತು. ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರೋದ್ಯಮ ಕೆಲವು ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗಳನ್ನು ಎದುರಿಸಬೇಕಾಯಿತು. ಆಗಲೇ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ನೇರವಾಗಿ ಇಲ್ಲವೆ ಪರೋಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಬ್ರಿಟೀಷರನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದವು. ಅದನ್ನು ತಡೆಯಲು ಕಠಿಣ ಸೆನ್ಸರ್‌ಶಿಪ್ ತರಲಾಯಿತು. ಕಚ್ಚಾ ಫಿಲಂಗಳ ಮೇಲೆ ಕೂಡ ನಿರ್ಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಹೇರಲಾಯಿತು. ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣಕ್ಕೂ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಉಂಟಾಯಿತು. ಮದ್ರಾಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ರಾತ್ರಿ ದೀಪವನ್ನು ಹಚ್ಚುವಂತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಯಾವಾಗ ಬೇಕಾದರೂ ವಿಮಾನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಶತ್ರುಗಳ ದಾಳಿ ನಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಎನ್ನುವ ಆತಂಕ ಕಾಡುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಫಿಲಂ ಅಡ್ವೈಸರಿ ಬೋರ್ಡ್‌ನವರು ಪರ್ಮಿಟ್ ಕೊಟ್ಟರೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಕಚ್ಚಾ ಫಿಲಂ ಸಿಗುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಇದನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಅನೇಕ ದಿನಗಳು ಕ್ಯೂ ನಿಲ್ಲ ಬೇಕಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಇಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ತಮಿಳು, ತೆಲುಗು ಸಿನಿಮಾಗಳಿಗೆ ಅದ್ಯತೆ. 1938ರಿಂದ 1940ರವರೆಗೆ ಒಂದೂ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರವೂ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಇತಿಹಾಸ ಇಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಮುಗಿದು ಹೋಗುವುದೋ ಎನ್ನುವ ಆತಂಕ ಕೂಡ ಎದುರಾಯಿತು. ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲೇಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುವ ಛಲದಿಂದ ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರು ಮೂರು ದಿನಗಳ ಕಾಲ ತಾವೇ ಸ್ವತಃ ಸರತಿ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಂತು ಬಹು ಶ್ರಮದಿಂದ ಕಚ್ಚಾ ಫಿಲಂ ಸಂಪಾದಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿದ್ದರು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ 'ಸುಭದ್ರ'ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದಲೂ ಬಹಳ ಪ್ರಮುಖವಾದದ್ದಾಗಿತ್ತು.

ಬಿ. ಪುಟ್ಟಸ್ವಾಮಯ್ಯನವರ 'ಸಂಗೀತ ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ಕಂಪನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದಂತಹ ನಾಟಕ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಎಪ್ಪತ್ತು ಗೀತೆಗಳಿದ್ದು ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಒಂದಕ್ಕಿಂತ ಒಂದು ಸೊಗಸಾಗಿದ್ದವು. ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣನೊಬ್ಬನಿಗೆ ನೆರವಾಗಲು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಬಿಲ್ಲನ್ನು ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಧರ್ಮರಾಯನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಏಕಾಂತದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಾಗ ಅಂತ:ಪುರದೊಳಗೆ ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಿಯಮ ಭಂಗವಾಗಿ ಅವನು ತೀರ್ಥಯಾತ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳ ಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ನಾರದರಿಂದ ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಿಗೆ ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯನ್ನು ವಿವಾಹ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಡುವ ವಿಷಯ ತಿಳಿಯುತ್ತದೆ. ಆಗ ಘಟೋತ್ಕಚನ ನೆರವನ್ನು ಬೇಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇಬ್ಬರೂ ಸಂನ್ಯಾಸಿಯ ವೇಷದಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ವಾರಕೆಗೆ ಬರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣನು ಸಂನ್ಯಾಸಿಯ ಆಗಮನವನ್ನು ವಿರೋಧಿಸಿದರೂ ಬಲರಾಮನು ಸ್ವಾಗತಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಸುಭದ್ರೆಗೂ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಸುಳಿವು ಸಿಕ್ಕುತ್ತದೆ. ಘಟೋತ್ಕಚನ ನೆರವಿನಿಂದ ಅರ್ಜುನ-ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯರ ವಿವಾಹವು ನೆರವೇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಸಂಗೀತಮಯವಾಗಿದ್ದಂತೆ ಇದು ಶೃಂಗಾರಮಯವಾದ ನಾಟಕ. ಕಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಣಯ, ಹಾಸ್ಯ, ಯುದ್ಧ, ರಾಜನೀತಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಹಲವು ಆಯಾಮಗಳಿದ್ದವು. ಇದನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಹಿಡಿದಿಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು ಗೀತೆಗಳು. ಅಭಿನಯ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಗೀತದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಣಿತರಾಗಿದ್ದ ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಮತ್ತು ಬಿ.ಜಯಮ್ಮನವರು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಿದ್ದು ಸಿನಿಮಾದ ಶಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿತ್ತು. ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಬರೆದಿದ್ದ

ಬಿ. ಪುಟ್ಟಸ್ವಾಮಯ್ಯನವರೇ ಚಿತ್ರಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಬರೆದರು. ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಎಪ್ಪತ್ತು ಗೀತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತೆರಡಕ್ಕೆ ಇಳಿಸಿ ಹೊಸ ವಿನ್ಯಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೆದು ಕೊಟ್ಟರು. ಇದೂ ಕೂಡ ಆವರೆಗಿನ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯೇ ಆಗಿತ್ತು. ತೆಲುಗಿನವರಾದ ಬಿ. ಪುಲ್ಲಯ್ಯನವರು ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರಾಗಿ ಆಯ್ಕೆಯಾದರು. ಅವರು ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸುವಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿದ್ಧಹಸ್ತರೆಂದೇ ಹೆಸರಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಅವರಿಗೂ ಮತ್ತು ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಅವರಿಗೂ ಸ್ನೇಹವು ಬೆಳೆಯಿತು. ಮುಂದೆ ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪನವರ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ 'ಗೋರ ಕುಂಬಾರ' ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಗೆ ಸಿಲುಕಿದಾಗ ಪುಲ್ಲಯ್ಯನವರೇ ನೆರವಿಗೆ ಬಂದರು. ಸಂಗೀತಮಯವಾದ 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಚಿತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಗೀತ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದವರು, ಪದ್ಮನಾಭ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳು. ಅವರು ಕಲ್ಕತ್ತಾದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿನಿಮಾ ವಾದ್ಯಗೋಷ್ಠಿಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ ಕುರಿತು ತರಬೇತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದರು. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮೊದಲ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಸತಿ ಸುಲೋಚನ'ದ ವಾದ್ಯ ಗೋಷ್ಠಿಯನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಅವರೇ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಭಾಷೆಗಳ ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ವಾದ್ಯಗೋಷ್ಠಿಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆಯನ್ನು ಅವರೇ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಸಂಗೀತದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಸಾಧಾರಣ ಪರಿಣತಿ ಮತ್ತು ಚಿತ್ರ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಗಳನ್ನೂ ಬಲ್ಲವರಾಗಿದ್ದ ಪದ್ಮನಾಭ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ಸಂಗೀತ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರಾಗುವ ಅವಕಾಶ ಆವರೆಗೂ ದೊರಕದೆ ಹೋಗಿದ್ದು ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯಕರವೇ ಸರಿ. ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರು 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಆ ಅವಕಾಶವನ್ನು ಒದಗಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟರು. ಪದ್ಮಭಾಭ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳೂ ಕೂಡ ಅದನ್ನು ಸಮರ್ಥವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡರು. ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿನ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಗೀತೆಗಳೂ ಪ್ರಯೋಗಶೀಲವಾಗಿದ್ದವು.

ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಅವರು ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದರೆ ಬಿ. ಜಯಮ್ಮನವರು ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದರು. ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಒತ್ತಾಯದಿಂದ ಪರಿಗಣಿತವಾಗಿ ವಿವಾದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದ್ದ ನಾಲ್ವಡಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣರಾಜ ಒಡೆಯರ್ ಅವರ ಆಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗೀತ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಾಗಿದ್ದ ದೇವೇಂದ್ರಪ್ಪನವರು ಕೊನೆಗೆ ನಾರದನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದರು. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದವರು ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ಕಂಪನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಈ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೇ ಹೆಸರಾಗಿದ್ದ ವಾಸುದೇವ ಗಿರಿಮಾಜಿಯವರು. ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರು ವಿದೂಷಕನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು, ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದವರು ಖ್ಯಾತ ರಂಗ ಕಲಾವಿದೆ ಗಂಗೂಬಾಯಿ ಗುಳೇದಗುಡ್ಡ. 1915ರಿಂದ 1926ರವರೆಗೆ ಅವರು ವಾಮನರಾವ್ ಮಾಸ್ತರರ ಕಂಪನಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವೈವಿಧ್ಯಮಯ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿ ಹೆಸರು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. 'ಸಂಗೀತ ಸುಧಾ' 'ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೋಗಿಲೆ' ಎನ್ನುವ ಬಿರುದುಗಳು ಅವರಿಗಿದ್ದವು. 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ನಾಟಕ ಕಂಪನಿ' ಎನ್ನುವ ಸ್ವಂತ ಕಂಪನಿಯನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಅವರು ಕೆಲ ಕಾಲ ನಡೆಸಿದ್ದರು. ಒಂದು ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಅವರು ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರು ಇದ್ದರೆ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಘನತೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದು ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರು ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಇದೇ ಅವರ ಅಭಿನಯದ ಕೊನೆಯ ಚಿತ್ರವಾಯಿತು. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಯಾದ ಕೆಲವೇ ದಿನಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಂದರೆ 1941ರ ಡಿಸಂಬರ್ 10ರಂದು ಅವರು ನಿಧನರಾದರು. ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದ ಗಂಗೂಬಾಯಿ ಗೋಕಾಕ್ ಕೂಡ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧ ರಂಗ ನಟಿ. ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರ ಮಗಳು ಜಿ.ವಿ.ಮಾಲತಮ್ಮನವರು ಕೂಡ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರು ಗುಬ್ಬಿ ಕಂಪನಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೇ 'ಸಂಗೀತ ಸುಭದ್ರ' ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬಹಳ ಸೊಗಸಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದರು. ಅದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಪ್ರೇಮಿಯಾಗಿ ಅವರ ಕಣ್ಣೋಟದೊಳಗಿನ ಭಾವಗಳು ಅಸಾಧಾರಣವಾಗಿದ್ದವು. ಗಾಯನದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಅವರದು ಮಿಂಚಿದ ಪ್ರತಿಭೆ. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ

ಚಿತ್ತಚೋರ ಸುಕುಮಾರ
ಮನವ ಸೆಳೆದ ಮಾರ

ಗೀತೆ ಬಹಳ ಮಹತ್ವದ್ದು. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕಿ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಈಗ ಸಿಂಧು ಭೈರವಿ ರಾಗ ಹೆಸರು ಮಾಡಿದೆ. ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಂತೂ

ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಬಳಕೆಯಾದಂತಹ ರಾಗ ಇದು. ಆದರೆ ಹೀಗೆ ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಿಯ ರಾಗದ ಜನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಗುರುತಿಸಲ್ಪಡುವ ಸಿಂಧುಭೈರವಿ ಮೂಲತಃ ಹಿಂದೂಸ್ತಾನಿಯಿಂದ ಬಂದಿದ್ದು. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕೀ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಸಿಂಧು ಭೈರವಿ ರಾಗವೊಂದಿತ್ತು. ಅದು ಹನುಮ ತೋಡಿ ರಾಗದ ಜನ್ಯವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಆರೋಹಣ ಮತ್ತು ಅವರೋಹಣ ಎರಡಲ್ಲೂ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣರಾಗ. ಅಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲ ಶುದ್ಧ ಮತ್ತು ಚತುಶ್ರುತ ರಿಷಭಗಳೆರಡೂ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿವೆ. ಇಂದು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಬಳಕೆಯಿಂದ ದೂರವಾಗಿರುವ ಈ ಸಿಂಧು ಭೈರವಿ ರಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಚಿತ್ತಚೋರ ಸುಕುಮಾರ' ಗೀತೆ ಸಂಯೋಜಿತವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪೂಜಾ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಈ ಗೀತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಮತ್ತು ಬಿ. ಜಯಮ್ಮನವರಿಬ್ಬರು ಸೊಗಸಾಗಿ ಹಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯು ಪೂಜಾ ಮಂದಿರಕ್ಕೆ ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆ ಯತಿಯ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅರ್ಜುನನನ್ನು ನೋಡುತ್ತಾಳೆ. ಆ ಬಾಹು, ಮುಖಭಾವ, ವಕ್ಷಸ್ಥಳ ಸಂನ್ಯಾಸಿಗೆ ಹೇಗೆ ಬಂತು ಎಂದು ಯೋಚಿಸುವಾಗ ಆರಂಭವಾಗುವ ಗೀತೆ ಇದು. ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಹಾಡು ಮುಗಿಯುವಾಗ ಅರ್ಜುನನು 'ತರಳೆ ಹಿಡಿ ಪ್ರಸಾದವಂ' ಎಂದು ಹಾಡನ್ನು ಮುಂದುವರೆಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಾಡಿನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ತಾನು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಖಚಿತ ಪಡಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಮುಂದೆ ಅದು ಪ್ರಣಯ ಗೀತೆಯಾಗಿ ಬೆಳೆಯುತ್ತದೆ. ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಗಂಟೆ ಅವಧಿಯವರಗೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಲ್ಪಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಈ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಮಾರು ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತು ನಿಮಿಷಗಳಷ್ಟು ದೀರ್ಘವಾದದ್ದಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಗರುಡನು ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷನಾಗುವ, ಅರ್ಜುನ ಮತ್ತು ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯರು ಗರುಡನ ಮೇಲೆ ಆಕಾಶ ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಹರಿಸುವ ಟ್ರಿಕ್ ಶಾಟ್ ಕೂಡ ಇತ್ತು. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಗೀತೆಗೆ ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕ ಮಹತ್ವವಿದೆ.

'ಸುಭದ್ರಾ' ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಚಿತ್ತವಶ ಪರಮೇಶ ದೇವ, ಅಣುರೇಣು ಕಣವಾಗಿ ಕಾವ' ಗೀತೆ ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪನವರು ಹಾಡಿದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ರಮಣೀಯವಾದ ಗೀತೆ. ಭೈರವಿ–ನೀಲಾಂಬರಿ–ಸುರಟಿ–ಮೋಹನ ರಾಗಗಳ ರಾಗಮಾಲಿಕೆಯಾದ ಗೀತೆಯನ್ನು ಅವರು ಅದ್ಭುತವಾಗಿ ಹಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಮಂಗಳರಾಗವಾದ ಭೈರವಿ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ಉದಯ ರಾಗವಾದ ಮೋಹನ ಅಂತ್ಯರಾಗವಾಗಿದ್ದದ್ದು ಈ ಸಂಯೋಜನೆಯ ವೈಶಿಷ್ಟ್ಯ. ಇದನ್ನು ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಅವರು ಸವಾಲಿನಿಂದ ಕೊಂಚವೂ ತೊಡಕು ಎನ್ನಿಸದಂತೆ ಹಾಡಿ ಚಾರಿತ್ರಿಕ ಗೀತೆಯನ್ನಾಗಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಚಿತ್ರವು ಪುಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣಗೊಂಡಿತ್ತು. ಆಗ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದ ವಿ. ಶಾಂತಾರಾಂ ಅವರು ಕ್ಯಾಮರಾ ಸ್ವಿಚ್ ಆನ್ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣ ಆರಂಭವಾದ ಕೆಲವೇ ದಿನದಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರ ತಂಡದವರೊಬ್ಬಬ್ಬರಾಗಿ ಅನಾರೋಗ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಲಗಿದ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ವಿಳಂಬವಾಯಿತು. ಆರು ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಗಿಸ ಬೇಕು ಎಂದು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದರೂ ಅದು ಹನ್ನೊಂದು ತಿಂಗಳಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಎಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಯಿತು. ಆ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೇ ಚಿತ್ರಕ್ಕಾದ ವೆಚ್ಚ ಒಂದು ಲಕ್ಷ ರೂಪಾಯಿಗಳು. ಅಂದರೆ ಅದು ಆ ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೇ 'ಬಿಗ್ ಬಜೆಟ್' ಚಿತ್ರ. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಚಾಮುಂಡೇಶ್ವರಿ ಚಿತ್ರಮಂದಿರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲು 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಗೊಂಡಿತು. ನಂತರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಹಲವು ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ತಮಿಳು ನಾಡಿನ ಕೆಲವು ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಗೊಂಡಿತು. ವೀರಣ್ಣನವರೇ ಹೇಳಿಕೊಂಡಂತೆ 'ಅತಿಯಾದ ಲಾಭವಿಲ್ಲ ಅಸಲಿಗೆ ಮೋಸವಿಲ್ಲ' ಎನ್ನುವಂತೆ ನಡೆಯಿತು. ವ್ಯವಹಾರಿಕ ಸಂಗತಿ ಏನೇ ಇರಲಿ. ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ ಬಂದ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಮೈಲುಗಲ್ಲಾದ ಚಿತ್ರ. 'ಸುಭದ್ರ' ಚಿತ್ರವು 1945ರಲ್ಲಿ ತಮಿಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದಿತು. ಟಿ.ಆರ್. ಸುಂದರಂ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ವಿಶೇಷವೆಂದರೆ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಹೊನ್ನಪ್ಪ ಭಾಗವತರ್ ಅವರು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಅಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಹೊಳೆಯೇ ಹರಿದಿತ್ತು. ತಮಿಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕೆ.ಎಲ್.ವಿ.ವತ್ಸಲಾ ಅವರು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

1943ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಒಂದು ಎಳೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ರಾಧಾರಮಣ'. ಇದರ ವಸ್ತು ಯಾವ ಕಾವ್ಯವನ್ನೂ ಅನುಸರಿಸಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಎಳೆಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿ ಸಾರ್ವತ್ರಿಕ ಸತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿತ್ತು. 'ಜೀವನದ ಪ್ರತಿ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆಯಲ್ಲೂ ತೋರಿ

ಬರುವ ಪ್ರೇಮ-ಕಾಮದ, ಸತ್ಯ ಸಂಶಯಗಳ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಎತ್ತಿ ತೋರಿಸುವ ಚಿತ್ರ' ಎಂದು ಜಾಹಿರಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಲಾಗಿತ್ತು.

ಎಂ.ವಿ.ರಾಜಮ್ಮನವರು ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕಿ. ಅವರು ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮೊದಲ ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕಿ ಕೂಡ ಆದರು. ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಸಿನ್ಹಾ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಮೂಲತ: ಶಬ್ದಗ್ರಾಹಕರಾದ ಅವರು ಅರ್ಧಕ್ಕೇ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಹೋಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ರಾಜಮ್ಮನವೇ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳಿಸಿದರೆಂದು ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ ವರದಿ ಮಾಡಿದೆ. ಅದರ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರನ್ನು ಮೊದಲ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಎಂದೂ ಕರೆಯಬಹುದು.

'ರಾಧಾರಮಣ' ರಾಧಾ-ಕೃಷ್ಣರ ಪ್ರಣಯದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ನಿಷ್ಕಳಂಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿದ ಚಿತ್ರ. ರಾಧೆಯ ಪತಿ ಅನಯನಿಗೆ ರಾಧಾ ಮತ್ತು ಕೃಷ್ಣರ ಸಂಬಂಧದ ಕುರಿತು ಸಂಶಯ. ರಾಧಾ ಕೃಷ್ಣರನ್ನು ಬೇರೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಕಂಸನ ನೆರವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಹಿತೈಷಿಯಂತೆ ಬಂದ ಕಂಸ ರಾಧೆಯನ್ನೇ ಬಲಾತ್ಕರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಅದನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ವಿಫಲಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಆಗ ಅನಯನ ಸಂಶಯ ದೂರವಾಗಿ ರಾಧೆಯ ಪತಿನಿಷ್ಠೆ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. 'ಚಿತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಭಾವ ಆರಾಧನೆ' ಎನ್ನುತ್ತದೆ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರದ ವರದಿ. ಮೊದಲ ದೃಶ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಷ್ಣು ದೇವಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ದೀಪೋತ್ಸವ. ಗೋಪಿಕೆಯರು ನರ್ತಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆದರೆ ರಾಧೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಅವಳದು ಮಾನಸಪೂಜೆ ಪತಿ ಸೇವೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿದ್ದಾಳೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ವಿಭಿನ್ನ ವಸ್ತುವಿನ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದಲೇ ಚಿತ್ರ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆದಿತ್ತು. ಮುಂದೆ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗಕ್ಕೆ ಆಧಾರ ಸ್ತಂಭವಾದ ಜಿ.ವಿ. ಅಯ್ಯರ್, ಟಿ.ಎಸ್.ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದು ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕವೇ.

ಕೆ. ಸುಬ್ರಹ್ಮಣ್ಯಂ 1943ರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಸುಧಾಮ'. ಖ್ಯಾತ ಬರಹಗಾರ ಬೆಳ್ಳಾವೆ ನರಹರಿ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಧಾಮನ ಪಾತ್ರ ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದವರು ಖ್ಯಾತ ಗಾಯಕಿ ಎಚ್.ಡಿ.ಸುಬ್ಬಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ. ಚಿತ್ರ ಸೆನ್ಸಾರ್ ಆದಾಗ ಕೇವಲ 943 ಅಡಿ ಇತ್ತು. ಈ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ತಮಿಳಿನ 'ಕುಚೇಲ' ಚಿತ್ರದ ಕೆಲವು ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಸೇರಿಸಿ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಶಂಕರ್ ಸಿಂಗ್, ಬಿ.ವಿಠಲಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ವಿಶ್ವನಾಥ ಶೆಟ್ಟರು 'ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಪಿಕ್ಚರ್ಸ್' ಎಂಬ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದಂತಹ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಕೃಷ್ಣಲೀಲಾ' 1947ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತ್ತು. ಸಿ.ವಿ.ರಾಜು ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಕೆಂಪರಾಜ ಅರಸ್ ಕಂಸನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಬೇಲೂರು ರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ರಾವ್, ಮರಿರಾವ್, ಕಾಂತಾ ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದವರು ಕುಮಾರಿ ಉಷಾ. ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿದ್ದರೂ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಾಕ್ಸ್ ಆಫೀಸಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಗ್ಗರಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಅಲ್ಪ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ 1953ರಲ್ಲಿ 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ' ಎನ್ನುವ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮರು ಬಿಡುಗಡೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು.

ರಂಗಭೂಮಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಸರು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದ ಬೆಳ್ಳಾವೆ ನರಹರಿ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳ ಅದೇ ಹೆಸರಿನ ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿ 1958ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಂತಹ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಗಾರುಡಿ' ಕಳೆದ ಕಾಲು ಶತಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಹಲವು ವಿಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ದುಡಿದು ಅನುಭವ ಪಡೆದಿದ್ದ ಹುಣಸೂರು ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳು ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರಾದಂತಹ ಚಿತ್ರ ಇದು.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಯುದ್ಧದ ಗೆಲುವಿಗೆ ತಾವೇ ಕಾರಣ ಎಂದು ಬೀಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಭೀಮ-ಅರ್ಜುನನರಿಗೆ ಬದಲಾಗಿ ನಕುಲ-ಸಹದೇವರಿಗೆ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜ ಯುವರಾಜರ ಪಟ್ಟವನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕುಪಿತರಾದ ಭೀಮ-ಅರ್ಜುನನರಿಗೆ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನು ಪಾಠ ಕಲಿಸುವುದೇ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವಸ್ತು.. ಎಲಿವಾಳ ಸಿದ್ದಯ್ಯ ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರ ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ ರಾಜ್ ಕುಮಾರ್ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. 1958ರ ಮೇ 22ರಂದು ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಹು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಮೈಲಿಗಲ್ಲು ಎನ್ನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿತು.

1950ರ ದಶಕದ ಕೊನೆಯ ಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗ ಡಬ್ಬಿಂಗ್‌ನ ಪ್ರವಾಹದಿಂದ ಕಂಗೆಟ್ಟಿತು. ಆಗ ಡಬ್ಬಿಂಗ್ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಕೇಳಿ ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ವಾದವೆಂದರೆ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದ್ದೂರಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬರುವುದು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಇದನ್ನು ಸವಾಲಾಗಿ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿ ಬಿ.ಎಸ್. ರಂಗಾ 'ದಶಾವತಾರ' ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿದರು. ಭಾರಿ ತಾರಾಗಣ, ಅದ್ದೂರಿ ಸೆಟ್‌ಗಳು, ಶ್ರೀಮಂತ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದಿಂದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಹೆಸರು ಮಾಡಿತು. ಹತ್ತು ಅವತಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಅವತಾರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ

ಬಂದಿತ್ತು. ರಾಜಾಶಂಕರ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೆ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಲೀಲಾವತಿ ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಆದವಾನಿ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿದೇವಿ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯಾಗಿ ರಾಜಶ್ರೀ ರಾಧೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿ ಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಚುಟುಕಾಗಿಯಾದರೂ ಪೂರ್ಣ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆ ಕನ್ನಡ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ ತೆರೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಕಾಣಿಸಿ ಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕವೇ.

ಮುಂದೆ ಬಂದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲವೂ ಉಪಕಥೆಗಳೇ..

ದಶಾವತಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಶಿಕವಾಗಿ ಬಂದ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಚಿತ್ರಣಕ್ಕೇ ಕನ್ನಡಿಗರು ಬಹುಕಾಲ ತೃಪ್ತಿಪಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಾಯಿತು. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಬಂದ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಉಪಕಥೆಗಳೇ. ಬೇರೆ ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಗಳು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದರೆ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಂತಹ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳೇ ಕಾಣಲಿಲ್ಲ. 1961ರಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಇಂತಹ ಉಪಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ 'ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನ' ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಂದಿತು. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮೊದಲ ವಾಕ್ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದ ವೈ.ವಿ.ರಾವ್ ಅವರೇ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಇದು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಮತ್ತು ಉಲೂಪಿಯವರ ಮಗ ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನನ ಕಥೆ. ಅವನನ್ನು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಶಾಪದಿಂದ ಮರೆತಿರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಪಾಂಡುರಾಜನಿಗೆ ಸ್ವರ್ಗ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿಯಾಗಲು ತಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಶೃಂಗವಿರುವ ಬಾಲಕನ ಬಲಿಯಾಗಬೇಕು. ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನನನ್ನು ಸೋಲಿಸಲು ಅರ್ಜುನ ಬರುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನನ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಶಿವ–ಪಾರ್ವತಿ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ನಿಲ್ಲುತ್ತಾನೆ. ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನನೇ ಗೆದ್ದಾಗ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಅಗ್ನಿಪ್ರವೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿದ್ದನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಕೊನೆಗೆ ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನನೇ ತನ್ನ ತಲೆ ಕತ್ತರಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ತಾತನ ಸ್ವರ್ಗ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿಗೆ ಕಾರಣನಾಗುತ್ತಾನೆ. ರಾಜ್ ಕುಮಾರ್ ದ್ವಿಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ವರಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ, ವಿ. ನಾಗಯ್ಯ, ಸಂಧ್ಯಾ, ಕಾಂತರಾವ್ ಮೊದಲಾದವರಿದ್ದರು. ಇದಾದ ಸುಮಾರು ಹತ್ತು ವರ್ಷಗಳವರೆಗೆ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಪಕಥೆಗಳೂ ಕೂಡ ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬಂದಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. 1971ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಎಲ್. ಸ್ವಾಮಿ (ರವೀ) ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮ' ಬಂದಿತು. ಭಾಗವತದ ಹಲವು ಕಥೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಭಾರತಿ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಬಿ.ಸರೋಜ ದೇವಿ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಆರತಿ ಜಾಂಬವತಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀನಾಥ್ ನಾರದನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಚರ್ಚಿಸಿರುವಂತೆ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೈಲುಗಲ್ಲಾಗಿರುವ ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಕಥೆ 1972ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತೆ ಚಿತ್ರವಾಗಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದಿತು. ಅದು ಕಣಗಾಲ್ ಪ್ರಭಾಕರ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದ 'ಸುಭದ್ರ'. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕಲ್ಪನಾ ಮತ್ತು ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಗಂಗಾಧರ್ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ರಾಜೇಶ್, ವಜ್ರಮುನಿ, ನರಸಿಂಹರಾಜು, ಗುರುರಾಜಲುನಾಯ್ಡು ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಕಣಗಾಲ್ ಪ್ರಭಾಕರ ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರಿಗಳದೇ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ. ಇದು ಸುಬ್ಬಯ್ಯನಾಯ್ಡು ಅವರ 'ಶ್ರೀಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯ ನಾಟಕ ಮಂಡಳಿ'ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ದವಾಗಿದ್ದ ನಾಟಕ. ಅವರದೇ ಸಂಗೀತದ 14 ಗೀತೆಗಳನ್ನು ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವಿಶೇಷವೆಂದರೆ ಚಾಮುಂಡೇಶ್ವರಿ ಸ್ಟುಡಿಯೋದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕೆಲಸಗಳು ನಡೆದ ಮೊದಲ ಚಿತ್ರ ಇದು. ಇದೇನಾದರೂ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಅಂದೇ ಚಿತ್ರಗೀತೆಗಳು ಕನ್ನಡದ ನೆಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೈದಾಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದವು. ಆದರೆ ಹಾಗಾಗಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಇನ್ನು ಹತ್ತು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗ ಕಾಯಬೇಕಾಯಿತು.

ಕೆಸಿಎನ್ ಮೂವೀಸ್‌ನವರು 1973ರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ ಅದ್ದೂರಿ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಮೂರೂವರೆ ವಜ್ರಗಳು'. ಹರಿಕಥಾ ವಿದ್ವಾಂಸರಾದ ಗುರುರಾಜುಲು ನಾಯ್ಡು ಅವರು ಹಿಂದೆ ಅರುಣ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ಎಂಬ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಮುಂದೆ ಹರಿಕಥಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧರಾದರೂ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ನಂಟು ಇದ್ದೇ ಇತ್ತು. ಅವರು ಹರಿಕಥೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 'ಮೂರೂವರೆ ವಜ್ರಗಳು' ಬಹಳ ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಅದನ್ನು ಚಿತ್ರವಾಗಿಸಬೇಕು ಎನ್ನುವುದು ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ಅವರ ಬಹುದಿನಗಳ ಬಯಕೆಯಗಿತ್ತು. ಅವರಿಗೆ ಕೆ.ಸಿ.ಎನ್ ಗೌಡ ಅವರು ಬೆಂಬಲವಾಗಿ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದರು. ಗುರುರಾಜುಲು ನಾಯ್ಡು ಅವರೇ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಸಿದ್ದಪಡಿಸಿದರು. ವೈ.ಆರ್.ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನನ್ನು ದರ್ಶನ ಮಾಡಲು ಬಂದ ನಾರದರನ್ನು ಸ್ವಾಗತಿಸಿದ ಭಗವಾನನು ತಾನು ಭಕ್ತರ ಭಕ್ತ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟ

ಪಡಿಸುವ ಸಲುವಾಗಿ ವಿನಯದಿಂದ ಕೈ ಮುಗಿದು ತನಗೊಂದು ಬಯಕೆ ಇರುವುದಾಗಿ ಮನವಿ ಮಾಡಿದನು "ಹಿಂದೆ ನಡೆದಿರಬಾರದು, ಮುಂದೆ ನಡೆಯ ಬಾರದು, ಅತ್ಯದ್ಭುತವೂ ಅತ್ಯಾಶ್ಚರ್ಯವೂ ಆಗಿದ್ದು, ಮರೆಯದಂಥ ಘಟನೆಗಳುಳ್ಳ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯವಾದ ಕತೆಯೊಂದನ್ನು ಹೇಳುವಿರಾ ಮಹರ್ಷಿ". ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ನಾರದರು ನಸು ನಗೆಯನ್ನು ಬೀರುತ್ತಾ "ಪರಮಾತ್ಮ! ನಿನ್ನ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪ ಹಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಇಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನಲಾದೀತೆ ನನಗೆ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಅವಕಾಶವನ್ನು ಕೊಡು. ಕಾಲ ಕೂಡಿ ಬಂದೊಡನೆಯೇ ಅಂಥ ಒಂದು ಕತೆಯ ಶ್ರವಣವನ್ನೂ ದರ್ಶನವನ್ನೂ ಮಾಡಿಸುವೆ" ಎಂದರು. ಹೀಗೆ ನಾರದರು ದರ್ಶನ ಮಾಡಿಸಿದ ಅಪೂರ್ವ ಕಥೆಯೇ "ಮೂರೂವರೆ ವಜ್ರ"ಗಳದ್ದು. ಕೃತವರ್ಮನು ದಾಯಾದಿಗಳ ದೆಸೆಯಿಂದ ರಾಜ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಅಂಧನಾಗಿ ಅಡವಿಯ ಪಾಲಾಗಿದ್ದನು. ಆಗ ನಾರದರ ಉಪದೇಶದಂತೆ ಶ್ರೀಹರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಇಡಲು ಮಹಾ ಪತಿವ್ರತೆಯಾದ ಸತ್ಯವತಿಯ ಕೈ ಹಿಡಿಯುವ ಅವಕಾಶವು ಲಭಿಸಿತು. ಆ ಸಾಧ್ವಿಯು ಶುಕ್ರವಾರದ ರಾತ್ರಿ ದೀಪೋತ್ಸವವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ ಅಷ್ಟ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯರನ್ನು ಪೂಜಿಸಿ ಅವರ ಆಶೀರ್ವಾದದಿಂದ ಬೆನ್ನು ಹತ್ತಿದ್ದ ದರಿದ್ರಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯರನ್ನು ಓಡಿಸಿ ಅಷ್ಟೈಶ್ವರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದು ಪತಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಆನಂದದಿಂದ ಇದ್ದಳು. ಆದರೆ ಸಿರಿಯು ಬಂದೊಡನೆ ಕೃತವರ್ಮನ ರೀತಿ ನೀತಿಗಳು ಬದಲಾದವು ತನ್ನ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವನ್ನು ಮರೆತು ಸತಿಯೊಡನೆ ಸದಾ ಸರಸ ಸಲ್ಲಾಪದಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿದನು. ನಾರದರು ಶಿಷ್ಯನನ್ನು ಸರಿ ಪಡಿಸುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಇರುಳ ಸೇವೆಗೆ ಸತಿಯನ್ನು ಕಳುಹಿಸುವಂತೆ ಕೋರಿದರು. ಕೃತವರ್ಮನು ತಲ್ಲಣಗೊಂಡನು. ಗಂಡನ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಅರಿತ ಕಲಾವತಿ ತಾನೇ ನೇರವಾಗಿ ದೇವರ್ಷಿಗಳಿದ್ದ ಮಂಟಪಕ್ಕೆ ಬಂದಳು. ರಾಣಿಯ ಆಗಮನವನ್ನು ಅರಿತ ನಾರದರು ಕಣ್ಣನ್ನು ಮುಚ್ಚಿ ಧ್ಯಾನಾಸಕ್ತರಾದರು. ಸತ್ಯವತಿ ಸೂರ್ಯೋದಯವಾಗುವವರೆಗೂ ನಿಂತಿದ್ದು ಬೆಳಗಾದ ಕೂಡಲೆ ಪತಿಯ ಸೇವೆಗೆ ತೆರಳಿದಳು. ಇದನ್ನೇ ಕಾಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದ ನಾರದರು "ನನ್ನಾಜ್ಞೆ ಇಲ್ಲದೆ ತೆರಳಿದ ನೀನು ಕುದುರೆಯಾಗು" ಎನ್ನುವ ಶಾಪವನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದರು. ಸತಿಗೊದಗಿದ ಗತಿಯನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ಕಂಬನಿಗರೆದ ಶಿಷ್ಯನಿಗೆ "ಮೂರೂವರೆ ವಜ್ರಗಳು ಸೋಕಿದಾಗ" ಅವಳ ಶಾಪ ವಿಮೋಚನೆಯಾಗುವುದು ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು. ಕೃತವರ್ಮನು ತನ್ನ ಬೊಕ್ಕಸದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ರತ್ನಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ತರಲು ಸಿದ್ಧನಾದಾಗ ನಾರದರು "ವಜ್ರಗಳೆಂದರೆ ಇವಲ್ಲ ವಜ್ರದೇಹ ಉಳ್ಳವರು" ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು. ಕಂಬನಿ ಮಿಡಿವ ಪತಿಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಲಾರದೆ ಕುದುರೆಯ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದ ಸತ್ಯವತಿಯು ದೇಶಾಂತರ ಹೋಗಿ ಯಾದವರ ಸಾಮಂತನಾದ ಸುಬುದ್ಧಿಯ ರಾಜ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋದಳು. ಸ್ಪರ್ಶ ಮಾತ್ರದಿಂದಲೇ ಅವನ ಖಾಯಿಲೆಗಳು ಗುಣವಾಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅದನ್ನು ದೇವಲೋಕದ ಅಶ್ವ ಎಂದೇ ಪೂಜಿಸ ತೊಡಗಿದನು. ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದ ಬಲರಾಮನು ಅಶ್ವವು ತನಗೆ ಸೇರ ಬೇಕು ಎಂದನು. ನಾರದರ ಉಪದೇಶದಿಂದ ಸುಬುದ್ದಿಯು ಭೀಮನ ಸಹಾಯವನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿದನು. ಆಗ ಪಾಂಡವರು ಮತ್ತು ಯಾದವರ ನಡುವೆ ಯುದ್ಧ ಸಂಭವಿಸಿ ಮೂರೂವರೆ ವಜ್ರಗಳ ಸಹಾಯದಿಂದ ಸತ್ಯವತಿ ಮೊದಲಿನ ರೂಪವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಳು. ಜನಪದದ ಶೈಲಿಯ ಈ ಕಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಸಂಖ್ಯಾತ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳಿದ್ದವು. ಎಲ್ಲವಕ್ಕೂ ತನ್ನದೇ ಆದ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹತ್ವ ಇತ್ತು. ರಾಜ್ ಕುಮಾರ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ನಾರದನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೆ ಶ್ರೀನಾಥ್ ಕೃತವರ್ಮನಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಯಂತಿ ಸತ್ಯವತಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಇಬ್ಬರು ಮಡದಿಯರ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಆರತಿ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮಾ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ಮಂಜುಳಾ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.

ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿದ್ದ 'ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನ' ಚಿತ್ರದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ರೂಪದಂತೆ ಕಂಡ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಬಭ್ರುವಾಹನ' ಅಷ್ಟೇ ಅಲ್ಲ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ಅವರೇ ತಂದೆ ಮಗನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಅದ್ದೂರಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ ಕೆ.ಸಿ.ಎನ್. ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ, ಪೌರಾಣಿಕ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಗ್ರಗಣ್ಯರೆನ್ನಿಸಿದ್ದ ಹುಣಸೂರು ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮಹತ್ವವನ್ನು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿದ್ದವು. ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮಹೂರ್ತವು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಹೊರವಲಯದ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಆಲದ ಮರದ ಬಳಿ ನಡೆದಾಗ ಹುಣಸೂರರು 'ಇದು ನನ್ನ ಮೂರು ದಶಕಗಳ ಸಾರಸಂಗ್ರಹ' ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಕೊಂಚ ಅತಿಶಯೋಕ್ತಿಯಂತೆ ಕಾಣುವ ಅವರ ಮಾತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲಮಟ್ಟಿನ ಸತ್ಯಾಂಶವೂ ಇತ್ತು. ಈ ಜಾಗವನ್ನೇ ಏಕೆ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ವಿವರಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಹುಣಸೂರು

ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ದಕ್ಷಬ್ರಹ್ಮನು ಒಂದು ಯಜ್ಞ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದನೆಂಬ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ 'ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಾಂಡ ಪುರಾಣ'ದಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುವುದಾಗಿಯೂ ಇಂತಹ ಕಥೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅದು ವಿಶ್ವಕೋಶದಂತೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದರು. ರಾಜ್‌ಕುಮಾರ್ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಮತ್ತು ಬಬ್ರುವಾಹನ ಎರಡು ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ ಅಭಿನಯ ನೀಡಿದ್ದರು. ಸರೋಜದೇವಿ ಚಿತ್ರಾಂಗಧೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಾಂಚನ ಉಲೂಪಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮೂಲಕ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗವನ್ನು ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದರು. ಸುಭದ್ರೆಯಾಗಿ ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಜಯಮಾಲಾ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆದಿದ್ದರು. ಟಿ.ಜಿ. ಲಿಂಗಪ್ಪನವರ ಸಂಗೀತ ಕೂಡ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಸಂಗತಿಯಾದವು. ಕಂದ ಮತ್ತು ಸೀಸ ಪದ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಹೋಲುವ ಶೈಲಿಯ ಪದ್ಯಗಳು ಚಿತ್ರದ ಉದ್ದಕ್ಕೂ ಇದ್ದವು. ಗೀತೆಗಳೂ ಕೂಡ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆದಿದ್ದವು. ಎಸ್.ವಿ. ಶ್ರೀಕಾಂತ್ ಕೂಡ ತಮ್ಮ ಛಾಯಾಗ್ರಹಣದಿಂದ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆದಿದ್ದರು. ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಇದೇ ನೈಜ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಎನ್ನುವಷ್ಟರ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಜನ ಮಾನಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂದಿಗೂ ನೆಲೆ ನಿಂತುಬಿಟ್ಟಿದೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿನ ಏಕಲವ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ದ್ರೋಣಾಚಾರ್ಯರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಕುವೆಂಪು ಅವರ 'ಬೆರಳ್‌ಗೆ ಕೊರಳ್' ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಅದೇ ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಹರ್ಷ ತೆರೆಗೆ ತಂದರು. ಇದು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಹಳೆಗನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣಗೊಂಡ ಏಕೈಕ ಕನ್ನಡ ಚಿತ್ರ. ಮಾ॥ ಬಿಪಿನ್ ಚಂದ್ರಭರತ್, ಮಾನು, ಪಂಡರಿಬಾಯಿ, ಸುಂದರ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅರಸ್ ಮೊದಲಾದವರು ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಇದನ್ನು ಕೆಮ್ಮಣ್ಣುಗುಂಡಿಯ ಸುತ್ತಾಮುತ್ತಾ, ಹೆಬ್ಬೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕಲ್ಲತ್ತಿ ಜಲಪಾತಗಳ ಬಳಿ, ಕುವೆಂಪು ಅವರ ಅಚ್ಚುಮೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಸ್ಥಳಗಳಾದ ನವಿಲುಕಲ್ಲು, ಸಿಬ್ಬಲಗುಡ್ಡ, ತುಂಗಾನದಿ ತೀರ, ಕವಿಶೈಲಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. 'ನವಿಲುಕಲ್ಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂರ್ಯೋದಯ', 'ಕವಿಶೈಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಧ್ಯೆ' ಹಾಗೂ 'ಗುರುಸ್ತುತಿ'ಗಳನ್ನು ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಬಳಸಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿತ್ತು ವ್ಯಾವಹಾರಿಕವಾಗಿ ಗೆಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೂ ಇದು ಕನ್ನಡದ ಮಹತ್ವದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಎಂದು ಗುರುತಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಕೆಯಾದ ಭಾಷೆ ಕನ್ನಡವಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಸಬ್ಸಿಡಿ ತಡೆ ಹಿಡಿದಿದ್ದು ಕೂಡ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವಾದವಾಯಿತು.

'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್'ನ ಮಾಯಾಲೋಕ

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್'ನದು ಮೈಲುಗಲ್ಲಾದ ಹೆಸರು. ಅದರ ಹಿಂದಿನ ಕಥೆ ಕೂಡ ಅಷ್ಟೇ ಮಹತ್ವದ್ದು. ವಾಸ್ತವವಾಗಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವಸ್ತುವನ್ನು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯಗೊಳಿಸಿದ್ದು ಸುರಭಿ ಎನ್ನುವ ರಂಗತಂಡ. ಸುರಭಿ ಎನ್ನುವುದು ಬರೀ ರಂಗತಂಡ ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲ ಕಡಪಾ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಕುಗ್ರಾಮವೊಂದರ ಸುಂದರ ಹೆಸರು. ಅಲ್ಲೊಂದು ಕುಟುಂಬ. 'ಶಾರದಾ ವಿನೋದಿನಿ ಸಂಗೀತ ನಾಟಕ ಸಭಾ' ಹೆಸರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಟಕಗಳನ್ನು ಆಡುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. 17ನೇ ಶತಮಾನದ ಅಂತ್ಯ ಆಶ್ರಿತ ರಾಜ್ಯಗಳಾದ ನಿಜಾಂ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಮರಾಠ ಪ್ರಾಂತ್ಯದ ನಡುವೆ ಬಫರ್ ಸ್ಟೇಟ್ ಎಂದು ಒಂದಿತ್ತು. ಇದರ ಉಸ್ತವಾರಿ ಬ್ರಿಟೀಷರದು. ಅಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಕೆಲವು ಮರಾಠ ಸೈನಿಕರನ್ನು ಕಳುಹಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಅವರು ಸುರಭಿಯನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ನೆಲೆ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡರು. ಆಕ್ರಮಣಗಳೇ ಸಂಭವಿಸದಿದ್ದಾಗ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಯುದ್ಧ ಮಾಡುವ ಪ್ರಮೇಯವೇ ಬರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಸ್ವಭಾವತಃ ಕಲಾ ರಸಿಕರಾದ ಮರಾಠರು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಟಕಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡ ತೊಡಗಿದರು. 1895ರಲ್ಲಿ ಗೋವಿಂದಪ್ಪ ಎನ್ನುವವನು ತನ್ನ ನಾಟಕ ತಂಡ ಕಟ್ಟಿಕೊಂಡು 'ಕೀಚಕ ವಧಾ' ಎನ್ನುವ ನಾಟಕ ಮಾಡಿದ. ಇದು ಯಶಸ್ವಿಯಾಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ನಾಟಕ ಕಲಿಯುವ ಹುಚ್ಚಿನಿಂದ ಮನೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಓಡಿ ಹೋಗಿ ನಂದ್ಯಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಸುಬ್ಬಯ್ಯ ನಾಟಕ ಮಂಡಳಿ ಸೇರಿದ್ದ ಹೆತ್ತವರು ಹುಡುಕಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದು ಪೆದ್ದ ಸುಬ್ಬಮ್ಮ ಎಂಬಾಕೆ ಜೊತೆ ಮದುವೆ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ನಾಟಕದ ಹುಚ್ಚು ಇಳಿಯಬಹುದು ಎನ್ನುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ. ಆದರೆ ಹೆಂಡತಿ ಕೂಡ ನಾಟಕದ ಹುಚ್ಚಿನವಳೇ ಅವರ ತಂದೆ ತಾಯಿ, ತಮ್ಮಂದಿರು ಅವರ ಹೆಂಡತಿಯರು ಹೀಗೆ ಕುಟುಂಬದ ಒಂದು ತಂಡ ಕಟ್ಟಿ 'ಕೀಚಕ ವಧಾ' ಆಡಿದರು. ಅದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾಯಿತೆಂದರೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಹಳ್ಳಿಯವರೂ ಅವರನ್ನು ಕರೆಯಲು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದರು. ಕುಟುಂಬದವರನ್ನು ಹೊರತು ಪಡಿಸಿ ಅನ್ಯರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರವೇಶವಿಲ್ಲ. ಬರೆಯುವವರೂ ಅವರೇ ನಾಟಕ ಆಡುವವರೂ ಅವರೇ. ಇವರ ಕೀರ್ತಿ ಹಬ್ಬಿ 1906ರಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಬಾಂಗ್ಲಾ, ಬರ್ಮ, ಮಲೇಷಿಯಾ, ಜಪಾನ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ ನೀಡಿದ್ದರು. ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆಗೆ ತಕ್ಕಂತೆ ಹೊಸ ನಾಟಕ ಬೇಕು ಎಂದಾಗ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್' (ಮಾಯಾ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತ

ಬಜಾರ್ ಉರ್ದು ಶಬ್ದ. ಇದು ನಾಟಕವನ್ನು ಗಡಿ ದಾಟಿಸಲು ಮಾಡಿದ ಯತ್ನ). ಶಶಿರೇಖಾ ಮಲಗಿದ ಮಂಚ ಆಕಾಶಕ್ಕೆ ಹಾರುವುದು, ಘಟೋತ್ಕಚನ ಬಾಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉಂಡೆಗಳು ಹೋಗುವುದು ಮೊದಲಾದ ಟ್ರಿಕ್‌ಗಳು ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಇತ್ತು. ಇದು ಎಷ್ಟು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾಯಿತು ಎಂದರೆ 'ಏನು ಸುರಭಿ ಟ್ರಿಕ್ಸಾ?' ಎಂದು ಜನ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರು ಮಾತಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಷ್ಟು. ಸುರಭಿ ತಂಡದವರು ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ ಬಾಲನಾಗಮ್ಮ, ಕೀಲುಗುರ್ರಂ, ಭಧ್ರಾಚಲ ರಾಮದಾಸರು, ಪಾಂಡವರ ವನವಾಸ ಎಲ್ಲವೂ ಮುಂದೆ ತೆಲುಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಶಸ್ವಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳಾದವು.

ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್ ನಾಟಕ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು 1919ರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂದರೆ ನೂರು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕೆಳಗೆ 1923–26ರ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಇಡೀ ಜಗತ್ತನ್ನೇ ಸುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಟಾಕಿ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅದನ್ನು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ ತೆರೆಗೆ ತರುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನಗಳು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದವು. 1936ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೊದಲ ಸಲ 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್' ಬೆಳ್ಳಿತೆರೆಯ ಮೇಲೆ ಬಂದಿತು. ಆದರೆ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ವೈಭವಗಳಿಲ್ಲದ ಆ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ನಾಟಕಕ್ಕೆ ಸರಿಸಾಟಿಯಾಗಲೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಮುಂದೆ ಬಹಳ ಕಾಲ ಈ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೇ ಅದನ್ನು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿತೆರೆಗೆ ತರಲು ನಿರ್ಮಾಪಕರು ಹಿಂದೆಗೆದಿದ್ದರು. 1951ರಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಚಮತ್ಕಾರದ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಪಾತಾಳ ಭೈರವಿ' ಸೂಪರ್ ಹಿಟ್ ಆಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ 'ವಿಜಯವಾಹಿನಿ' ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಮುಂದಿನ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್' ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಿದರು. ತೆಲುಗು ಮತ್ತು ತಮಿಳು ಭಾಷೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಏಕಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾದ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕನ್ನಡ ಮತ್ತು ತೆಲುಗಿಗೆ ಡಬ್ ಮಾಡಲಾಯಿತು. ಚೆನ್ನೈನ ಬಳಿ ಎನ್ನೂರ್ ಎಂಬ ಹಳ್ಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇಡೀ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಸೆಟ್ ಹಾಕಲಾಯಿತು. ದ್ವಾರಕೆ ನಗರಕ್ಕಾಗಿಯೇ ಮುನ್ನೂರು ಮಿನಿಯೇಚರ್ ಮನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಕದ್ರಿ ವೆಂಕಟರಾವ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಆರಂಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಅವರನ್ನು ದುರ್ಯೋದನನ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಸ್ಕ್ರೀನ್ ಟೆಸ್ಟ್ ನಂತರ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಲಾಯಿತು. ಆದರೆ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಇದನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಲೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಹಲವು ದಿನಗಳ ಚರ್ಚೆಯ ನಂತರ ಒಪ್ಪಿದರು. ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಪಾರ್ವತಿಯವರು ಬರೆದಿರುವ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಜೀವನ ಚರಿತ್ರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಚಿಸಿರುವಂತೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್. ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ ಹಲವು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಇದು ಆರಂಭಿಕ ಬಿಂದುವಾಯಿತು. ಅಕ್ಕಿನೇನಿ ನಾಗೇಶ್ವರ ರಾವ್ ತೆಲುಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ಜೆಮಿನಿ ಗಣೇಶನ್ ತಮಿಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಸಾವಿತ್ರಿ ತೆಲುಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಶಶಿರೇಖೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದರೆ ವತ್ಸಲ ತಮಿಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಎಸ್.ವಿ.ರಂಗರಾವ್ ಎರಡೂ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಘಟೋತ್ಕಚನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಈ ಪಾತ್ರ ಡಬ್ ಆದ ರೀತಿಗೆ ಅಸಮಧಾನಗೊಂಡ ರಂಗರಾಯರು ಮುಂದೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಕರಾರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಡಬ್ ಮಾಡಬಾರದು ಎಂಬ ನಿಯಮವನ್ನೂ ಕೂಡ ಸೇರಿಸಲು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿದರು. ಚಿತ್ರದ ಹೈಲೈಟ್ ಎಂದರೆ 'ವಿವಾಹ ಭೋಜನವಿದು' ಗೀತೆ. ಘಟೋತ್ಕಜನ ಭರ್ಜರಿ ಭೋಜನ ಈ ದೃಶ್ಯವನ್ನು ನಾಲ್ಕು ದಿನಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಸತತವಾಗಿ ಸ್ಟಾಪ್ ಅನಿಮೇಷನ್ ಸಿನಿಸ್ಕೋಪ್ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಮೂಲಕ ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಪಸುಮತಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿ ಈ ಸಾಹಸವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ ಛಾಯಾಗ್ರಾಹಕರು. 27 ಮಾರ್ಚ್ 1957ರಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಡುಗಡೆಯಾದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಒಂದೇ ವಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಹತ್ತು ಲಕ್ಷ ಗಳಿಸಿತು. ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಕೋಟಿ ಗಳಿಕೆ ಮಾಡಿದ ಅಪರೂಪದ ಸಾಧನೆ ಮಾಡಿತು. 1995ರಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್ನೊಮ್ಮೆ 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್' ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬಂದರೂ ಇದರ ಸಾಧನೆಗೆ ಸರಿಸಾಟಿ ಎನ್ನಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲ. 2007ರಲ್ಲಿ 'ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್' ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡ ಸುವರ್ಣ ಮಹೋತ್ಸವದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ದಾಸರಿ ನಾರಾಯಣರಾವ್ ಹೊಸ ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಬಳಸಿ ಇದನ್ನು ಮರು ರೂಪಿಸಿದರು.

ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳೂ ಬಂದವು

ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ರಾಮಾಯಣ ಬಂದಿದ್ದು ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಾದರೆ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬಂದಿದ್ದು ಹಿಂದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ. 1965ರಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತು. ಬಾಬುಬಾಯಿ ಮಿಸ್ತ್ರಿ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಪಾಂಡವರ ಜನನದಿಂದ ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದವರೆಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿ ಭಟ್ಟಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ, ಪ್ರದೀಪ್ ಕುಮಾರ್ ಅರ್ಜುನನಾಗಿ ದಾರಾಸಿಂಗ್ ಭೀಮನಾಗಿ, ಅಚಲಾ ಸಚ್ ದೇವ್ ಕುಂತಿಯಾಗಿ, ಪದ್ಮಿನಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ, ಭೂಷನ್ ತಿವಾರಿ

ದುರ್ಯೋಧನನಾಗಿ ಜೀವನ್ ಶಕುನಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಯಷ್ಟು ಯಶಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಕಾಣದಿದ್ದರೂ ಚಿತ್ರಗುಪ್ತ ಅವರ ಸಂಗೀತ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದಿದ್ದ ಮಹಮದ್ ರಫಿಯವರ ಹಾಡುಗಳು ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಜನಪ್ರಿಯವಾದವು. ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬಂಗಾಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದಿತು. ಕಮಲೇಶ್ವರ ಮುಖರ್ಜಿ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಸೋಹನಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರ್ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ ಅನಿಬನ್ ಭಟ್ಟಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ ದೇಬಶ್ರೀ ರಾಯ್ ಕುಂತಿಯಾಗಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಚಿತ್ರವೆಂದರೆ ಪೀಟರ್ ಬ್ರೂಕ್ ಅವರದ್ದು. 1989ರಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ಮೊದಲು ಒಂಭತ್ತು ಗಂಟೆಗಳ ನಾಟಕವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ನಾಲ್ಕು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಬೇರೆ ಬೇರೆ ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶನ ನೀಡಿದ ನಂತರ ಇದನ್ನು ಚಲನಚಿತ್ರವಾಗಿಸಲಾಯಿತು. ಜಾಗತಿಕ ನೆಲೆಗೆ ಕೊಂಡೊಯ್ಯುವ ಸಲುವಗಿ ವಿದೇಶಿ ಕಲಾವಿದರೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಇದೂ ಕೂಡ ಮುಂದೆ ವಿವಾದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಯಿತು. ಬ್ರೂಸ್ ಮಯಾರ್ಸ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ ವಿಟ್ಟೋರಿಯೋ ಮುಜಿಗಾರೋ ಅರ್ಜುನನಾಗಿ, ಮರ್ಮೋದು ಸೋಮೆ ಭೀಮನಾಗಿ ಮಲ್ಲಿಕಾ ಸಾರಾಭಾಯಿಯಾಗಿ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಬಾರದಿದ್ದರೂ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ಕೆಲವು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದವು. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದದ್ದು 1963ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆಲುಗಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಡಿ ಬಂದ 'ನರ್ತನಶಾಲಾ' ಮಾಯಾಬಜಾರ್‌ನಂತೆಯೇ ಮೈಲಿಗಲ್ಲು ಎಂದು ಕರೆಸಿ ಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಕಲಾವಿದೆ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿರಾಜ್ಯಂ ಮತ್ತು ಶ್ರೀಧರ ರಾವ್ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ 'ವಿರಾಟಪರ್ವ' ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ವಸ್ತು. ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಸಂತೋಷದಿಂದಲೇ ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪಿಕೊಂಡರು. ಆದರೆ ಬೃಹನ್ನಳೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ವಹಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿದಾಗ ಹಿಂಜರೆದರು. ಆಗಲೇ ಸ್ಟಾರ್ ಆಗಿದ್ದ ಅವರ ಇಮೇಜ್‌ಗೆ ಇದು ಧಕ್ಕೆ ತರಬಲ್ಲದಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿದೇವಿ ಅವರನ್ನು ಒತ್ತಾಯಿಸಿದಾಗ ಒಲ್ಲದ ಮನಸ್ಸಿನಿಂದಲೇ ಒಪ್ಪಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಆದರೆ ಬೃಹನ್ನಳೆಯ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ಅವರು ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ ಕ್ರಮ ಇಂದಿಗೂ ನಭೂತೋ ನಭವಿಷ್ಯತಿ ಎನ್ನುವ ಹಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾವಿತ್ರಿ ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೆ ಎಸ್.ವಿ.ರಂಗರಾವ್ ಕೀಚಕನಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ದುಮ್ಮಡಿ ರಾಜಗೋಪಾಲ್ ಭೀಮನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಸಮುದ್ರಾಲ ರಾಘವಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಅವರ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಕೂಡ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಅಂಶವಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಇಂದಿಗೂ ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ವಿರಾಟ ಪರ್ವ ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿದ ಚಿತ್ರ ಇದೊಂದೇ ಆಗಿದೆ. 2004ರಲ್ಲಿ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಅವರ ಮಗ ನಂದಮೂರಿ ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನು ಮರು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರೇ ಅರ್ಜುನ ಮತ್ತು ಬೃಹನ್ನಳೆ ಪಾತ್ರ ವಹಿಸಲು ಸಿದ್ದವಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ಅವರನ್ನು ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಆಯ್ಕೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಸಿದ್ದತೆ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವಾಗಲೇ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯ ವಿಮಾನ ಅಪಘಾತದಲ್ಲಿ ದುರ್ಮರಣವನ್ನು ಅಪ್ಪಿದರು. 'ದ್ರೌಪದಿ ಪಾತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಸಮನಾದ ಇನ್ನೊಬ್ಬ ಕಲಾವಿದೆ ಇಲ್ಲ' ಎನ್ನುವ ಕಾರಣದಿಂದ ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನವನ್ನು ಕೈ ಬಿಟ್ಟರು. 1963ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಂತಹ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಚಿತ್ರ ಬಿ.ಎಸ್.ರಂಗಾ ಅವರು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ ತಮಿಳಿನ 'ಕರ್ಣನ್' ಶಿವಾಜಿ ಗಣೇಶನ್ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ರಾಮರಾವ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿದ್ದರು. ಎಂ.ವಿ. ರಾಜಮ್ಮ ಕುಂತಿಯ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಕಲಾವಿದರನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಒಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ತಂದ ಹೆಗ್ಗಳಿಕೆಯ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ಶಿವಾಜಿ ಗಣೇಶನ್ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಹೊಸ ಇಮೇಜ್ ಕೂಡ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿತ್ತು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ಯುದ್ದ ನಡೆದಿದೆ ಎನ್ನಲಾದ ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಚಿತ್ರೀಕರಣ ನಡೆಸಿದ್ದು ಚಿತ್ರದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಹೆಗ್ಗಳಿಕೆ.

ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕುರಿತು ಬಂದ ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಪಾಂಡವ ವನವಾಸ' 1965 ಮತ್ತು 1973 ಹೀಗೆ ಎರಡು ಸಲ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಎನ್.ಟಿ.ಆರ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸದೇ ಹೋಗಿದ್ದು ಇದೊಂದೇ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ. ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರು

ಭೀಮನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು, ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ ಸಾವಿತ್ರಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಎಸ್.ವಿ. ರಂಗರಾವ್ ದುರ್ಯೋದನನಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಂತರಾವ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. 1977ರಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ವಸ್ತುವಾಗಿರಿಸಿದ್ದ ಮೂರು ಮಹತ್ವದ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದವು. 'ದಾನವೀರ ಶೂರ ಕರ್ಣ'ದಲ್ಲಿ ಎನ್.ಟಿ. ಆರ್ ಕರ್ಣ, ದುರ್ಯೋದನ ಮತ್ತು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನ ಪಾತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರೆ ಅವರ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾದ ನಂದಮೂರಿ ಹರಿಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅರ್ಜುನನಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಇದೇ ವರ್ಷ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡ 'ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಂ' ಕಮಲಾಕರ ಕಾಮೇಶ್ವರ ರಾವ್ ಅವರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದ ಚಿತ್ರ, ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಅರ್ಜುನನಾಗಿ, ಶೋಭನ್ ಬಾಬು ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ ಕೃಷ್ಣಂರಾಜು ಕರ್ಣನಾಗಿ ಜಮುನ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಇದೇ ವರ್ಷ ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬಂದ ತಮಿಳು ಚಿತ್ರ 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣಲೀಲಾ' ಎ.ಪಿ. ನಾಗಾರ್ಜುನ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನದ ಚಿತ್ರ, ಶಿವಕುಮಾರ್ ಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ, ಟಿ.ಆರ್.ಮಹಾಲಿಂಗಂ ನಾರದನಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀವಿದ್ಯಾ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯಾಗಿ ಮತ್ತು ಜಯಲಲಿತಾ ಸತ್ಯಭಾಮಾ ಆಗಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಇದರ ಮುಂದಿನ ವರ್ಷ 'ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪಾಂಡವೀಯಂ' ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬಂದಿತು. ತ್ರಿವಿಕ್ರಮ ರಾವ್ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು. ಎನ್.ಟಿ. ಆರ್ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಮತ್ತು ದುರ್ಯೋದನ ಎರಡೂ ಪಾತ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಕೆ.ಆರ್. ವಿಜಯ ರುಕ್ಮಿಣಿಯಾಗಿ ಸ್ವರ್ಣ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಭಿನಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.

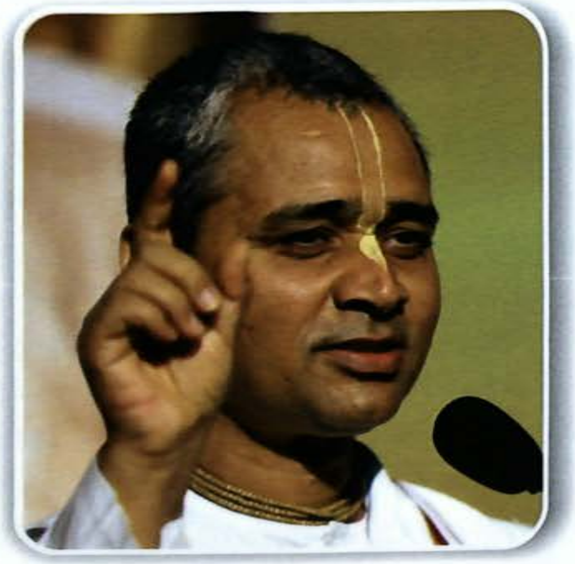
ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೀಗೆ ಮುಂದೆ ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿದ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬರದಿದ್ದರೂ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡ ಮೈಲುಗಲ್ಲಾಗಬಲ್ಲ ಚಿತ್ರಗಳು ಬಂದಿವೆ.

ಬದಲಾದ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬರಲು ಸಿದ್ದವಾಗಿರುವ ಮಹಾಭಾರತಗಳು

ಬೆಳ್ಳಿತೆರೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಗ್ಲಾಮರ್‌ಗೆ ಮಹತ್ವ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದಂತೆ ಅವರ ಗ್ಲಾಮರ್ ಬದಲಾಯಿತು. ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಕಥೆಗಳು ತೆರೆಗೆ ಬರುವುದು ಅಪರೂಪವಾಯಿತು. 1993ರಲ್ಲಿ ಜಿ.ವಿ. ಅಯ್ಯರ್ 'ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆ'ಯನ್ನು ತಾತ್ವಿಕ ಚೌಕಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿನಿಮಾವಾಗಿಸಿದ್ದರು. ಟಿ.ವಿ. ಧಾರಾವಾಹಿಯಾಗಿ ಬಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅದು ಇನ್ನಷ್ಟು ಕ್ಷೀಣಿಸಿತು. 2018ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕನ್ನಡದ ರತ್ನತ್ರಯರಾದ ಪಂಪ, ರನ್ನ, ಪೊನ್ನ ಮೂವರ ಕಾವ್ಯದ ಒಂದೊಂದು ಪ್ರಸಂಗಗಳನ್ನು ಆಧರಿಸಿದ ಶ್ರೀದರ್ಶನ್ 'ಮಹಾಕಾವ್ಯ' ಚಿತ್ರ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದರು. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಸಂಗ ರನ್ನನ 'ಸಾಹಸಭೀಮ ವಿಜಯ'ವನ್ನೂ ಆಧರಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಮುನಿರತ್ನ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ 'ಕುರುಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ' 2019ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆರೆ ಕಂಡಿತು. ಕನ್ನಡದ ಖ್ಯಾತನಾಮರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಚಿತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದರು. ಜಿ.ಕೆ. ಭಾರವಿ ಅವರ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯವಿರುವ ಚಿತ್ರದ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನ ನಾಗಣ್ಣನವರದು. ದರ್ಶನ್ ದುರ್ಯೋನನಾಗಿ, ರವಿಚಂದ್ರನ್ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣನಾಗಿ, ಅಂಬರೀಷ್ ಭೀಷ್ಮನಾಗಿ, ಅರ್ಜುನ್ ಸರ್ಜಾ ಕರ್ಣನಾಗಿ, ಶ್ರೀನಾಥ್ ಧೃತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರನಾಗಿ, ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸ ಮೂರ್ತಿ ದ್ರೋಣಾಚಾರ್ಯರಾಗಿ, ಶಶಿಕುಮಾರ್ ಧರ್ಮರಾಜನಾಗಿ, ಡ್ಯಾನಿಷ್ ಅಬ್ಬಾಸ್ ಭೀಮನಾಗಿ ಸ್ನೇಹ ದ್ರೌಪದಿಯಾಗಿ, ಭಾರತಿ ವಿಷ್ಣುವರ್ಧನ್ ಕುಂತಿಯಾಗಿ, ನಿಖಿಲ್ ಅಭಿಮನ್ಯುವಾಗಿ ರವಿಶಂಕರ್ ಶಕುನಿಯಾಗಿ, ಮೇಘನಾ ಭಾನುಮತಿಯಾಗಿ, ಅದಿತಿ ಉತ್ತರೆಯಾಗಿ, ಹರಿಪ್ರಿಯಾ ಮಾಯೆಯಾಗಿ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.

ಮಲೆಯಾಳಂನಲ್ಲಿ ಎಂ.ಟಿ. ವಾಸುದೇವನ್ ನಾಯರ್ ಅವರ 'ರೆಂಡಮಾಜಂ' ಆಧರೊಸೊ ಮೋಹನ್ ಲಾಲ್ ನೇತೃತ್ವದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾವಿರ ಕೋಟಿಗಳ 'ಮಹಾಭಾರತ' ರೂಪುಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇದು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಚಿತ್ರರಂಗದ ಅತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಬಂಡವಾಳದ ಚಿತ್ರವಾಗುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಇದ್ದು ದೇಶದ ಹಲವು ಪ್ರಮುಖ ನಟರು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಗಳಿದ್ದು ಭೀಮನ ಕಣ್ಣಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾಭಾರತವನ್ನು ಚಿತ್ರಿಸಿರುವ ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಭೀಮನಾಗಿ ಸ್ವತಃ ಮೋಹನ್ ಲಾಲ್ ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಎರಡು ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಚಿತ್ರ ಮೂಡಿ ಬರಲಿದ್ದು ಮೊದಲನೇ ಭಾಗ 2020ಕ್ಕೆ ತೆರೆ ಕಾಣುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಇದೆ. ಹಿಂದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕೂಡ ರಾಮ್ ಗೋಪಾಲ್ ವರ್ಮ ಸಾವಿರ ಕೋಟಿಗಳ ಮಹಾಭಾರತದ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಒಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲ ಬದಲಾದರೂ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿತೆರೆ ಮಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ಮಹಾಭಾರತ ನಿತ್ಯ ಸತ್ಯದ ಕಾವ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಉಳಿದುಕೊಂಡಿದೆ. ❑

the sublime character of mahatma vidura



—**Shri Rajeev Lochana Prabhu**

Vidura is one of the prominent figures in the history of the Mahābhārata. Even though it is accepted that he was a śūdra by birth, because he renounced the world for spiritual enlightenment by the authority of Ṛṣī Maitreya and was thoroughly educated by him in transcendental knowledge, he was quite competent to occupy the post of an ācārya, or spiritual preceptor.

Once upon a time the state police caught some thieves who had concealed themselves in the hermitage of Maṇḍūka Muni. The police constables, as usual, arrested all the thieves and Maṇḍūka Muni along with them. The magistrate specifically punished the muni to death by being pierced with a lance. When he was just to be pierced, the news reached the king, and he at once stopped the act on consideration of his being a great muni. The king personally begged the muni's pardon for the mistake of his men, and the saint at once went to Yamarāja, who prescribes the destiny of the living beings. Yamarāja, being questioned by the muni, replied that the muni in his childhood pierced an ant with a sharpened straw, and for that reason he was put into difficulty. The muni thought it unwise on the part of Yamarāja that he was punished for his childish innocence, and thus the muni cursed Yamarāja to become a śūdra, and this śūdra incarnation of Yamarāja was known as Vidura, the śūdra brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Mahārāja Pāṇḍu.

Vidura is one of the prominent figures in the history of the Mahābhārata. He was conceived by Vyāsadeva in the womb of the maidservant of Ambikā, mother of Mahārāja Pāṇḍu. Vidura, born in the womb of a śūdra woman, was forbidden even to be a party of royal heritage along with his brothers Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu.

Being Sudra by birth, how could then Vidura occupy the post of a preacher to instruct such learned kings and kṣatriyas as Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira?

Reason 1: He was thoroughly educated in Transcendental Knowledge Even though it is accepted that he was a śūdra by birth, because he renounced the world for spiritual enlightenment by the authority of Ṛṣī Maitreya and was thoroughly educated by him in transcendental knowledge, he was quite competent to occupy the post of an ācārya, or spiritual preceptor.

According to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, anyone who is conversant in the transcendental knowledge, or the science of Godhead, be he a brāhmaṇa or a śūdra, a householder or a sannyāsī, is eligible to become a spiritual master.

Even in the ordinary moral codes (maintained by Cāṇakya Paṇḍita, the great politician and moralist) there is no harm in taking lessons from a person who may be by birth less than a śūdra.

Reason 2: Vidura was not actually sudra-but was to play the part of Sudra-he was actually great authority Yamaraj

Vidura was not actually a śūdra. Vidura is the incarnation of Yamarāja. Being cursed by Maṇḍūka Muni, he was to become a śūdra.

Why did Yamraj come to earth? That too being born as a Sudra?

Yamaraj is one of the twelve mahājanas, on the level with such exalted personalities as Brahmā, Nārada, Śiva, Kapila, Bhīṣma, Prahlāda, etc. Being a mahājana, it is the duty of Yamarāja to preach the cult of devotion to the people of the world, as Nārada, Brahmā, and other mahājanas do. But Yamarāja is always busy in his plutonic kingdom punishing the doers of sinful acts. Thus Yamarāja has very little time to take leave from his responsible office of punishing the wrongdoers. But he wanted to preach the glories of the Lord, and therefore by the will of the Lord he was cursed by Maṇḍūka Muni to come into the world in the incarnation of Vidura and work very hard as a great devotee.

Such a devotee is neither a śūdra nor a brāhmaṇa. He is transcendental to such divisions of mundane society, just as the Personality of Godhead assumes His incarnation as a hog, but He is neither a hog nor a Brahmā. He is above all mundane creatures. The Lord and His different authorized devotees sometimes have to play the role of many lower creatures to claim the conditioned souls, but both the Lord and His pure devotees are always in the transcendental position.

Even though seemingly partial to Pandava's, Vidura was actually equally affectionate to both the camps of nephews.

Being affectionate he always chastised Duryodhana for his intriguing policy against his cousins.

Being affectionate he always criticized his elder brother for his policy of encouragement to his sons.

Being affectionate at the same time he was always alert in giving special protection to the Pāṇḍavas.

Even though faithful servitor of Dhrtarastra, Vidura was always alert in giving protection to Pandava's.

Even though Vidura was a faithful servitor of his eldest brother, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, he did not like his political ambition for the sake of his own sons. He was therefore very careful about the protection of the Pāṇḍavas and their widow mother.

Before the Battle of Kurukṣetra, Dhṛtarāṣṭra's policy was peaceful annihilation of his nephews, and therefore he ordered Purocana to build a house at Vāraṇāvata, and when the building was finished Dhṛtarāṣṭra desired that his brother's family live there for some time. When the Pāṇḍavas were going there in the presence of all the members of the royal family, Vidura tactfully gave instructions to the Pāṇḍavas about the future plan of Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

Later on, Vidura came in disguise to the Pāṇḍavas and informed them that the housekeeper was going to set fire to the house on the fourteenth night of the waning moon. It was an intrigue of Dhṛtarāṣṭra that the Pāṇḍavas might die all together with their mother. And by his warning the Pāṇḍavas escaped through a tunnel underneath the earth so that their escape was also unknown to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, so much so that after setting the fire, the Kauravas were so certain of the death of the Pāṇḍavas that Dhṛtarāṣṭra performed the last rites of death with great cheerfulness. And during the mourning period all the members of the palace became overwhelmed with lamentation, but Vidura did not become so, because of his knowledge that the Pāṇḍavas were alive somewhere. There are many such instances of calamities, and in each of them Vidura gave protection to the Pāṇḍavas on one hand, and on the other he tried to restrain his brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra from such intriguing policies. Therefore, he was always partial to the Pāṇḍavas, just as a bird protects its eggs by its wing.

Why did Vidura become so affected by the words of Duryodhana that he left the palace and went away for pilgrimage.

Vidura was very much attached to his elder brother, and all along he tried to guide him on the right path. During the fratricidal war of Kurukṣetra, Vidura repeatedly implored his elder brother to do justice to the sons of Pāṇḍu, but Duryodhana did not like such interference by his uncle, and thus Duryodhana practically insulted Vidura. This resulted in Vidura's leaving home for pilgrimage.

1. **To become enlightened in Transcendental Knowledge**

   The house of the Pāṇḍavas was as good as Vṛndāvana, the transcendental abode of the Lord, and Vidura should not have given up that place of transcendental bliss. Therefore the reason for his quitting the house was not exactly family misunderstanding; rather, Vidura took the opportunity to meet Ṛṣī Maitreya and discuss transcendental knowledge. For a saintly person like Vidura, any disturbance due to worldly affairs is insignificant. Such disturbances, however, are sometimes favorable for higher realization, and therefore Vidura took advantage of a family misunderstanding in order to meet Maitreya Ṛṣi.

2. **To detach himself and prepare for Renounced order of Life**

   Vidura was practically insulted by Duryodhana's calling him a son of a śūdrāṇī. But Vidura went out from the palace to detach himself from household affairs, especially political intrigues. He therefore decided to quit his paternal house and prepare for the renounced order of life. This preparatory stage is called vānaprastha-āśrama, or retired life for traveling and visiting the holy places on the surface of the earth.

3. **To purify the holy places**

   The Personality of Godhead is omnipresent by His diverse potencies everywhere, just as the power of electricity is distributed everywhere within space. Similarly, the Lord's omnipresence is perceived and manifested by His unalloyed devotees like Vidura, just as electricity is manifested in an electric bulb. A pure devotee like Vidura always feels the presence of the Lord everywhere.

The holy places all over the earth are meant for purifying the polluted consciousness of the human being by an atmosphere surcharged with the presence of the Lord's unalloyed devotees. To go to some holy place of pilgrimage does not mean only to take a bath in the Ganges or Yamunā or to visit the temples situated in those places. One should also find representatives of Vidura who have no desire in life except to serve the Personality of Godhead.

So by their actions the pure devotees of the Lord can render any place into a place of pilgrimage. Such pure devotees are able to rectify the polluted atmosphere of any place, and what to speak of a holy place rendered unholy by the questionable actions of interested persons who try to adopt a professional life at the cost of the reputation of a holy place.

Why did Vidura again return back to the palace he had left earlier?

Mahātmā Vidura had already adopted the renounced order of life, and therefore he did not return to his paternal palace to enjoy some material comforts. He accepted out of his own mercy what was offered to him by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, but the purpose of living in the palace was to deliver his elder brother, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was too much materially attached. Dhṛtarāṣṭra lost all his state and descendants in the fight with Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, and still, due to his sense of helplessness, he did not feel ashamed to accept the charity and hospitality of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira.

Vidura particularly came to enlighten Dhṛtarāṣṭra and to give him a lift to the higher status of spiritual cognition. It is the duty of enlightened souls to deliver the fallen ones, and Vidura came for that reason.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra is blind and continues to hope to live comfortably in the midst of all kinds of reverses of life. A sādhu like Vidura is meant to awaken such blind persons and thus help them go back to Godhead, where life is eternal. Once going there, no one wants to come back to this material world of miseries. We can just imagine how responsible a task is entrusted to a sādhu like Mahātmā Vidura.

Only by good luck does such a miserly man meet a self-realized soul like Vidura and by his instruction gets rid of the nescience of material existence.

Like Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the materialistic person may take lessons from a sādhu like Vidura and thus be cleansed of the effects of modern life.

Hare Krishna. ❑

National Confer
June 26 · 30, 201

Swami Japasiddhananda, from Kolkata being felicitated by Shri. H.N. Suresh, Director, BVB while others join

judicial aspects in mahabharata

— **K.G. Raghavan**

At the very start of the monumental work "History of Dharmasastra", P.V. Kane remarks that "Dharma is one of those Sanskrit words that defy all attempts at an exact meaning rendering in English or any other language".

Compliance with the rules of Dharma is voluntary, dictated by that inner voice speaking from the heart while legal edicts or rules are imposed by an external power and demands compliance, whether willingly or otherwise. "Ethics in law" or "Legal Ethics" is the heat of the fire or the cold in the ice. Ethics is the basis or an intrinsic part of the laws.

व्यासं वसिष्ठ नप्तारं
शक्तेः पौत्रं अकल्मषं ।
पराशरात्मजं वन्दे
शुकतातं तपोनिधिं ॥

Paying my obeisance to the great master who gave us the great works which have sustained civilization, I shall now delve into the subject of this presentation, namely, "Legal ethics in Mahabharata".

The term "legal ethics" in its various manifestations, is encompassed in that term of holistic understanding namely "DHARMA". "Ethics" and "Law" are not two different concepts or ideas and cannot and should not be divorced from each other. One is the obverse and the other is the reverse of the same coin as it were. Law as made by the King or Ruler/s, originates from the prime ordeal and eternal concept of "Dharma", "Ethics" being the poor English translation of this potent term. Ethics must manifest itself in the form of law, backed by sanctions for disobedience. At the very start of the monumental work "History of Dharmasastra", P.V. Kane remarks that "Dharma is one of those Sanskrit words that defy all attempts at an exact meaning rendering in English or any other language". Dictionaries set out various meanings of Dharma such as "ordinance, usage, duty, right, justice, morality, ethics, virtue, religion, good works, function or characteristic et al. It is like the ten blind men describing an elephant. All of them are correct but not complete.

"Dharma" are rules for good conduct, based upon eternal values, uninfluenced by the vagaries of **Kaala, Desha or Varthamana;** it is applicable to both a believer and a non-believer. It is not stated to be a rule or a mandate emanating from a superior one to a subordinate or backed by sanction. Compliance with the rules of Dharma is voluntary, dictated by that inner voice speaking from the heart while legal edicts or rules are imposed by an external power and demands compliance, whether willingly or otherwise. "Ethics in law" or "Legal Ethics" is the heat of the fire or the cold in the ice. Ethics is the basis or an intrinsic part of the laws. Can one conceive of fire without heat or ice without cold ? It is artificial to do so. Similarly ethical behaviour or Dharma has to be and is ingrained in law, in order that law may be an effective engine for progress and peace in an orderly society.

The first step therefore towards formation or framing any law is to identify the tenets of Dharma or ethics, the moving force and then to proceed to the next step, namely, drafting the law or legislation. A law which is not so based will invite resistance towards its compliance; lead to widespread disgruntlement; disobedience or compelled obedience as opposed to voluntary compliance and eventually be a dead letter. The aim and object of every polity is and should be to create a society based upon Dharma and not only Law.

The advent of the concept of "legal" in Dharmic societies is not apart from or divorced from integrated living, but is a component of a holistic lifestyle. Dharma is not validated by social and legal sanctions but vice versa, in that, social and legal sanctions have to be validated by the rules of Dharma. Dharma or Ethics is not a illusory or vague concept. It is a definite juristic thought and is the central theme or the fulcrum for any law.

The causal link between human behavioural patterns and the growth of law finds origin in the Smritis, the principal one being the Manusmriti. It is the **MAGNA CARTA** for law making.

To illustrate , the laws of modern days demand respect and regard for women. The ethics behind this law is found in the oft quoted verse of Manusmriti.

यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।
यत्रैतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तत्राफलाः क्रियाः ॥

"Gods love to remain in places where women are worshipped. Where there is no respect for women every activity becomes fruitless."

Every modern law is meant to promote peace, good order, social good and restraint in the enjoyment of material comforts or wealth. The underlying principle is enunciated in the Yagnavalkya Smriti.

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
दानं दमो दया क्षान्तिः सर्वेषां धर्मसाधनम् ॥

"Non violence, truthfulness, not to steal, purity, control of senses, generosity, restraint, kindness and forgiveness are the means to the social good."

An apparent conflict is perceived between Dharmic principles/ customs and statute law or constitutional dharma. This perceived conflict reached its crescendo in the Sabarimala conflict resulting in the much debated and criticised judgment of the Supreme Court of India in the case of *"Indian Young Lawyers Association Vs. State of Kerala" [2018 SCC Online SC 1690]* . The Supreme Court erred in failing to take note of the wise approach suggested in Narada Smriti.

धर्मशास्त्रविरोधे तु युक्तियुक्तोऽपि धर्मतः ।
व्यवहारो हि बलवान्धर्मस्तेनावहीयते ॥

"When there is a contradiction between Dharma text and Custom, it is right to apply common sense, for customs prevails over dharma".

Understand "Dharma text" in the context as the Constitution. Common sense was not applied in the Sabarimala case which as everyone is aware led to widespread discontent and protests.

Next, on the wisdom of having an upper house in a bicameral system for law making. Again Narada Smriti embodies the logic.

न सा सभा यत्र न सन्ति वृद्धा
वृद्धा न ते ये न वदन्ति धर्मम् ।
नासौ धर्मो यत्र न सत्यमस्ति
न तत्सत्यं यच्छलेनानुविद्धम् ॥

"A court is not a court if there are not elders. Elders are not elders unless they pronounce dharma. Dharma is not dharma unless there is truth. Truth is not truth if it is mixed with sophistry."

Does the present Rajya Sabha in this country qualify to be such a court? I leave it to your judgement.

Having thus seen very briefly, the role of the Smritis in law making, now let me advert to a few aspects in this regard as emanating from the Mahabharata.

धर्मे च अर्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ ।
यदिहास्ति तदन्यत्र यन्नेहास्ति न तत्क्वचित् ॥

"O best of Bharat Race, whatever about Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha ,that is contained in this Bharata, may be met with elsewhere; but whatever is not in it is not to be found anywhere." (Adi Parva. Chapter 62 verse 53).

Dharmic principles, as bedrock of public life, are stated in the Mahabharata in several places. Before noticing them, it is apt to first look at the consequences of debased politics as stated in the Mahabharata.

मज्जेत् त्रयी दण्डनीतौ हतायां
सर्वे धर्माः प्रक्षयेयुर्विबुद्धाः ।
सर्वे धर्मा श्चाश्रमाणां हताः स्युः
क्षात्रे त्यक्ते राजधर्मे पुराणे ॥

"When politics becomes lifeless, the triple Vedas sinks, all, the dharnas (i.e.bases of civilisation) howsoever developed] completely decay. When traditional state ethics, are departed from , all the bases of the divisions of individual life are shattered." [Shanti Parva Chapter 63 verse 28]

On the basic requirement of Raja Dharma or politics, the Mahabharata declares:

सर्वे त्यागा राजधर्मेषु दृष्टाः
सर्वे दीक्षा राजधर्मेषु चोक्ताः ।
सर्वे विद्या राजधर्मेषु युक्ताः
सर्वे लोका राजधर्मे प्रविष्टाः ॥

"In politics are realised all forms of renunciation; in politics are united all the sacraments; in politics are combined all knowledge; in politics are centered all the worlds."

The concept of "Dharma" came up for consideration before the Supreme Court of India in the case of *A.S. Narayana Deekshitulu Vs. State of A.P. [AIR 1996 SC 1765]*. The court was considering the meaning and purport of the term "religion" in Act. 25 and 26 of the Constitution of India. 1950 "Religion", noted the Supreme Court, *"as understood in the context of fundamental rights as enshrined in Act 25 and 26 is used as being synonymous with 'Dharma'"*. These two terms are used interchangeably. The court noted that English language has no parallel word for "Dharma" and therefore the word "religion" was used. The word "Dharma" has therefore found its place in the Oxford Dictionary as it is. The Supreme Court relies upon the exposition of the concept in Karna Parva Chapter 69 verse 58

> *"Dharma is for the stability of the society; the maintenance of social rider and the general well being and progress of humankind. Whatever conducted to the fulfilment of these objects is Dharma, that is definite."*

The preamble to the Indian Constitution which assures to the people of India, **Justice** - social, economic and political; **Liberty** of thought, expression and belief, faith and worship; **Equality** of status and of opportunity; and **Fraternity**, assuring dignity of the individual and the integrity of Nation, originates from this concept Dharma. Directive Principles of State Policy as expounded in Part IV of the Constitution is also based on this accepted meaning of Dharma.

Justice P.V. Rajamannar, a renowned jurist from Madras, in a celebrated judgment rendered in 1962, expounds the concept of law being founded on Dharma as follows:

> *"Law is something more than a mere secular code of conduct. It is something more and something higher than the contents of any statute book or volumes of judicial decisions. It's foundation is the concept of Justice, an instinct for which is deep seated in our moral being, though it is incapable of precise definition. The content of the concept of justice may vary from age to age, from country to country and at different stages of social development. But its categorical imperative is constant".*

These concepts of respect for the dignity of every individual as constituting the basic Dharmic principle upon which is founded the secular law, finds eloquence in Lord Krishna's rendering of the Bhagavadgita in Chapter 12 verses 13 and 14.

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ (१३)

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ (१४)

> *"One who is not envious but is a kind friend to all living entities, who does not think himself a proprietor and is free from false ego, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who is tolerant, always satisfied, self - controlled and engaged in devotional service with determination, his mind and intelligence fixed on Me, such a devotee of Mine is very close to Me".*

"Ethics in law" is the recognition of the Dharmic principle underlying a law. On being questioned by Yudhishthira about the meaning and scope of Dharma, Bhishma states.

> *"It is most difficult to define Dharma. Dharma has been explained to be that which helps the upliftment of living beings. Therefore that which ensures welfare of living beings is surely Dharma. The learned Rishis have declared that which sustains is Dharma."*
> *(Shanti Parva Chapter 109 verses 9 to 11)*

तादृशोऽयमनुप्रश्नो यत्र धर्मः सुदुर्लभः ।
दुष्करः प्रतिसंख्यातुं तत्केनात्र व्यवस्यति ॥
प्रभवार्थाय भूतानां धर्मप्रवचनं कृतम् ।
यः स्यात्प्रभवसंयुक्तः स धर्म इति निश्चयः ॥
धारणाद्धर्ममित्याहुर्धर्मेण विधृताः प्रजाः ।
यः स्याद्धारणसंयुक्तः स धर्म इति निश्चयः ॥

Nine principles have been set out as rules of Dharma for persons belonging to every Varna.

अक्रोधः सत्यवचनं संविभागः क्षमा तथा ।
प्रजनः स्वेषु दारेषु शौचमद्रोह एव च ॥
आर्जवं भृत्यभरणं नवैते सार्ववर्णिकाः ।

Truthfulness, to be free from anger, sharing one's wealth with others, forgiveness, procreation of children from one's wife alone, purity, absence of enmity, straightforwardness, maintaining persons dependent on oneself are the nine Dharmas of persons belonging to all the Varnas.

Analysing the great epic Mahabharata, Justice Rama Jois remarks that it contains a large number of verses on topics of law particularly in the Shanti Parva which sets out elaborately the law relating to constitution and the organisation of a kingdom and the dharma required to be followed by kings in administering their kingdom, under the title Raja Dharma.

This now takes me to setting out briefly the tenor of Bheeshma's advise founded on Dharma, to Yudhisthira, sometime before Bheeshma passed away from this world. The advise is contained in the Shanti Parva, being the 12th of the 18 books of the Epic. Bheeshma tells Yudhishthira about the duties of a king which is most relevant in the present times, in the face of falling standards amongst politicians and administrators, a concern which has shaken the confidence of the public in the continued existence of the polity itself.

1. First duty is to worship the Gods. The king should essentially be a man of action. Without action a king can never help destiny play its part. Destiny is no doubt powerful. But action is equally powerful. Both are potent.
2. The king must be truthful and only then he can inspire the confidence in the minds of the subjects.
3. Behaviour of a king must be above reproach. Self restraint, humility and righteousness should be the qualities of the king.
4. Justice should be the second nature of the king.
5. The Kings conduct must be straightforward but not too mild.
6. The King should choose his servant wisely. He should choose honest persons to hold important offices.
7. The King should always be alert; acting against external and internal foes.
8. First duty of a king is towards his subjects; king should subordinate his desire and wishes to those of his subjects.
9. Confidentiality is a must to succeed as a king.
10. The king should ensure that his subject live in freedom and happiness.
11. The king should protect his subject and their happiness.
12. A king should keep a watch over his treasury.
13. A king should procure allies outside his country.

On the duties of the subjects or people, Bheeshma set out the follows Dharmic rules.

1. Elect an honest king.
2. Pay taxes honestly.
3. Be respectful and obedient to the king and law.

Being modest, self restrained, truthful, sincere with courage to speak the truth are the hallmarks of a good legislator.

These were laid as rules of Dharma in the field of public life or service. Equally forcefully Mahabharata lays down rules of conduct for individuals. In this context Yaksha Prashna in the Vana Parva may be looked into. The importance of mother, father, liberality, truth, wife, skill development, knowledge, health, mercy, honesty, patience and good behaviour and many more have poignantly referred to in the question and answer session between Yaksha and Yudhishthira. Are not all of our laws based on these notion of Dharma? Pleased with Yudhishthira, Dharma or Yaksha grants to Yudhishthira his kingdom of "Righteousness" and liberation from the Arishadvargas namely, **Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya.** Thus, ends this episode.

The next to mention is Vidura Neeti being part of the Udyoga Parva. To a disturbed Dhritarashtra, Vidura tenders several homilies, all based on the eternal rules of Dharma. For the wise –

1. Aspire for higher things, ideals in life.
2. Self knowledge, exertion, forbearance and steadiness in virtue.
3. Neither anger nor joy nor pride nor false modesty nor vanity should distract
4. Actions must be done so as to serve both the worlds
5. Desire should not tinge actions.
6. Do not be affected by honours or slights; be calm, cool and unagitated.

As far as foolish are concerned :

1. Scriptures are closed books
2. Vanity, pride and covetousness are his qualities.
3. Envy is his constant companion.
4. He is sinful.

Per contra a wise man :

1. Should learn good behaviour, good words and good acts from every side.
2. Should learn to be truthful; learn by application; cleanse the body and bear good character.
3. Should control speech and utter only words filled with meaning and delight.
4. Should never quarrel with friends; avoid the company of the vile and low.
5. Should swallow anger.

Each of the above finds embodiment in one or other civil or criminal laws of modern India. Have you ever thought why committing fraud or cheating is frowned upon in civil law as well as in criminal law as actionable wrongs? Who laid down that these are abhorrent to a civilised society. These are tenets of Dharma and the modern law has only given to it a structured expression. Therefore looked at from any point of view, be in Public law or Private law realm, Dharma is the very foundation upon which the superstructure of the various laws are constructed. That is "LEGAL ETHICS".

P.V. Kane in his treatise on the history of Dharmasastra recognizes the claim made in Aadi Parva (Chapter 2 Stanza 83) that Vyasa composed the Mahabharata as a great Dharmasastra (treatise on politics and government), as Arthasastra (treatise on fiscal policies), Mokshasastra (treatise on realization) and also as Kamasastra (treatise on enjoyment of worldly pleasure).

अर्थशास्त्रमिदं प्रोक्तं
धर्मशास्त्रमिदं महत् ।
कामशास्त्रमिदं प्रोक्तं
व्यासेनामित बुद्धिना ॥

The philosophy enshrined in the Gita has been adopted as part of judge made law in this country. In a case, the Supreme Court of India "requested" the Madras High Court to take up a particular case early and dispose off the same. When the request of the Supreme Court was brought to the notice of the Madras High Court, the High Court noted that it was only a request and did not consider that the case required an urgent hearing and refused to take up the case out of turn. This approach of the High court was again brought to the notice of the Supreme Court. In the cases of *Spencer and Company Limited vs. Vishwadarshan Distritbutors P Ltd [1995(1) SCC 259]*, referring to Art 141 of the Constitution of India, the Supreme Court borrowed the tenets of the Bhagavadgita to hold that the action of the Madras High Court was wrong. The Supreme Court said

> *"7. Traditions and norms in this regard, well established and followed in this country since time immemorial, are best reflected in the "Song Celestial", the Bhagavadgita . It would for the purpose be apposition to turn to the 18th chapter of the Bhagavadgita, containing the concluding portion of the dialogue between Lord Krishna, the Best of Beings,(Purushottama) and Arjuna the Best of Humans (Narottama), both superiors in themselves. Verse 63 in the words of Lord Krishna is:*

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥

Translation: Thus I have explained to you the most confidential of all knowledge. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do .

8. Verse 73 containing the answering words of Arjuna is:

अर्जुन उवाच
नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

Translation:

O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by Your mercy and I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to Your instructions.

> *For Arjuna, the freedom given to act as he wished to, was an illusion; acing in conformity with the instructions of Krishna a bounded duty, This* message has perceptibly percolated down as perfect of Indian culture, philosophy and behavioural setting the tenor in the Constitution for interaction between the high constitutional authorities and institutions. One needs only to be aware of this thought with which the Constitution is soaked "

To conclude, it is appropriate to recall the following words of Dr. K.M. Munshi in his preface to C. Rajagopalachari's Mahabharata.

> *"The Mahabharata is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is whole literature in itself, containing code of life; a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the Gita, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grades of sagas."*

❑

Message of Mahabharata
National Conferenc e 26 - 30, 2019

'Message of Ramayana' book being launched by Shri Banwarilal Purohit, Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu (Centre) whle others joins.

Mahabharata in Modern Sanskrit Literature

—Dr. S. Ranganath

Contrary to popular belief, there is an astonishing quantity of creative upsurge of writing in Sanskrit today which is qualitatively of such high order that it can easily compare with Sanskrit writing in any century not excluding the golden age of Sanskrit. The shear amount of published work in all fields of literary activity is truly mind boggling. Sanskrit being a pan Indian language, the writers are spread out along the entire length and breadth of the country and as in ancient days from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Bombay to Calcutta a large number of extremely talented writers have been practising the art of creative great literature in the Sanskrit Language. Mahabharata being no exception to it, the following works could be dealt with here-Mahakavyas, Khandakavyas, Gadyakavyas and Dramas.

There is nothing in our literature that can measure up to Mahabharata's vastness of range. Gifted with an unsurpassable subtle suppleness the Mahabharata always lends itself to later readings and appropriations. This quality of remaining usable without being shaashwata is also there in varying degrees in the works of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Rabindranath and such others. But what is unique to the original epic, if there ever was one, is that 'The Mahabharata held together its own age - gave it road-directions; told stories spanning over a very wide space-time of the history of the world; showed an extra-ordinarily sensitive unique capacity to touch the heart by its style of telling tales, by elevating ordinary small things to divine proportions, and by reflecting clearly and luminously the most esoteric things in the mirror of the heart (Das 2007: 52)

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I. MAHAKAVYAS

The epic has been considered as the highest form of literature all over the world. In the West, Tragedy was also named along with the Epic as representing the highest literary achievement. While in the West, the Epic and the Ballad were considered objective poetry, the Lyric was the subjective mode. The Epics themselves were thought as either oral / popular or written / Literary. While Homer's Illiad is an example of the former Milton's Paradise Lost belongs very much to the latter category. However, in the Indian context apart from the fact that Tragedy is not a literary genre, the Epic itself is the soul representative of the sublime expression in poetry and the Western categories of the Popular and the Written does not really constitute the difference among epics. The following Epics based on Mahabharata can be considerd here:-

1. **Saticharitam** - K.S. Krishna Murthy Sastry-1953

   Saticharitam was composed by K.S. Krishna Murthy Sastry borrowing the material from Mahabharata. This epic has eleven cantos out of which the first four cantos were published in the Samskruta Kamadhenu in the year 1923 and later on another seven cantos were added to it and was published in the form of a book in the year 1953 from Madurai. Though the subject matter is not new, the way the epic story has been transformed into a "real epic" is worth taking note of. The author in the middle just to clarify some of the unusual forms has employed the grammatical sutras in the brackets to authenticate the scanned point.

2. **Adbhutadutam** - Jaggu Vakulabhushana-1968

Jaggu Vakulabhushana is the most prolific creative writer of Karnataka who has contributed to every form of Sanskrit Literature. He has received the coveted President's certificate of honour from Government of India. Adbhutadutam is a Mahakavya based on the story of Udyogaparvan of Mahabharata. It was published in 1968 and consists of 15 cantos. The story commences with Srikrishna seeing Pandavas after their Ajnatavasa along with Balarama. He becomes the messenger of peace, gets ridiculed by Duryordhana in Hastinavati and informs Pandavas that their peace mission has failed and war becomes inevitable. Style of the poet is full of vigour and forceful. Krishna's greatness, helplessness of Dhrtarastra, Duryodhana's high handedness, softness of Dharmaraja have been portrayed naturally. Bhakti and Shanta Rasas have been sketched complimentary to one another and Subhasitas have added dignity to the work.

3. **Ciraharana Mahakavyam** - Paramananda Sastry-Date not mentioned.

Paramananda Sastry was Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh and has contributed to almost all forms of Sanskrit Literature. Ciraharana Mahakavyam is an epic based on Mahabharata and has twelve cantos. The epic is in conformity with the rules of a traditional Mahakavya. Disrobing of Draupadi in the open assembly is the subject matter of this epic which has a nice blend of tradition with modernity as is the case with the other works of Sastriji. Draupadi is pictured here as a modem woman exploited by heartless man. Krsna rescues Draupadi by admonishing Dussasana in the court.

4. **Bhisma Caritam** - Hari Narayan Dikshit- 1990

Hari Narayan Dikshit was Professor and Head, Department of Sanskrit at Kumaon University, Nainital and received Sahitya Akademi Award for his epic Bhisma Caritam. This is an epic in 20 Cantos and was published in 1991 from Delhi based on the story of Bhisma which got the coveted Sahitya Academy award.

5. **Bruhannala** - Harshdev Madhav - 1997

Harshdev Madhav taught Sanskrit at H.K. Arts College, Ahmadabad and has received Sahitya Akademi Award for his work "Tava Sparse Sparse". He is a gifted poet who combines the Greek and Sanskrit synthesis through his imagery. He also deals with contemporary social problems of the society in his poetry. When Pandavas were in Agnatavasa each one of the Pandavas were in incognito. Arjuna in the disguise of Bruhannala served in the court of Virata and that forms the subject matter for this epic. In seven cantors the poet has beautifully brought out the character of Arjuna and the work got published in the year 1997 from Sanskrit Akademi, Gujarat.

II. KHANDAKAVYAS

Next to Mahakavyas it is the Khandakavya which occupies a pride of place in Sanskrit writing. The following Khandakavyas based on Mahabharata can be considered here.

1. **Kaunteyam** - Paramananda Sastry - Date not mentioned

This Khandakavya written by Paramananda Sastry of Aligarh is based on the glorious character of Karna. Its composition is different from a traditional Khandakavya.

2. **Bhishmashatakam** - Sri Krishna Semaval- 1991

Sri Krishna Sernaval was the secretary of Delhi Sanskrit Akademi. He has completed a unique Sanskrit Project on Subhashitas in Sanskrit Literature from Vedic Times to Modern Times. He has composed hundred stanzas on the life of Bhishma.

3. **Jata Shakuntala** - Shatavadhani. Dr. R. Ganesh-1989

Shatavadhani. Dr. R. Ganesh, an Asukavi in Sanskrit is the recipient of many awards like Badarayana Puraskar, Kavyakanta Puraskar and so on. As a creative writer he has Khandakavyas, Dramas, Blank Verse, Dvisandhana Kavyas to his credit. Jata Shakuntala deals with the character of Shakuntala.

III. GADYAKAVYAS

The origin of prose could be traced back to the Vedic times. When compared to poetry, prose was less in number and hence the popular maxim **"Prose is the touch stone for poets"** came into existence. In this context H.V. Nagaraja Rao's Upakhyana Yugmam is noteworthy. The two mythological episodes concerning Urvasi and Sakuntala have been transformed here into simple prose.

IV. DRAMA

Drama is the finest form of literary creation. Drama is neither a static form of Art nor a motionless picture of the universe, but it reflects the dynamic nature of the world characterised by incessant flow of happiness and despair. It is an active portrayal of the sentiments that revolve around us. The narrative poetry is generally intended for the learned and the cultured minds whereas Drama caters to the tastes of one and all irrespective of one's level of intellect, sex, age, religion, caste, and so on. Bharata's statements in the twenty seventh chapter of Natyasastra reveals the same truth. The object of a drama is two fold - to give delight and to instruct. The dramatist is expected to fuse these two in a subtle and most effective way. The following dramas based on Mahabharata can be considered here:-

1. **Naladamayantiyam** - Kalipada Tarkacharya - 1932

Kalipada Tarkacharya taught Sanskrit at Sanskrit College Calcutta. He is the recipient of Padmasri and Mahamahopadhyaya titles. He is the author of an Epic and three Dramas. Naladamayantiyam was published from Samskruta Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta in the Year 1932. It has six acts. Dramatist has brought out some of the changes from the Nalopakhyana of Mahabharata. Some of them are –

1) In the original Mahabharata Nala comes as a messenger and conveys to Damayanti that she should marry some god whereas here Nala does not disclose his identity.

2) In Nalopakhyana, Damayanti going from one hermitage to the other is described at length, whereas here that description is shortened.

3) Nala meeting his son Indrasena is dramatically brought out here. Nala comes to Vidarbha incognito as the charioteer of Rutuparna. Vidusaka having come to know this arranges for the meeting of father and the son. When Nala starts ridiculing himself having come incognito before his son, the son gets enraged and tries to wage War on his father and this situation is marvellously brought out here.

4) Nala's brother Puskara has also undergone a change here, Puskara is a good natured one here and voluntarily hands over the kingdom to Nala.

Thus, each one of the modifications brought out by the dramatist are highly relevant and significant.

2. **Yaksaprasna Natakam** - Jaggu Singararya- 1968

Jaggu Singararya belongs to the traditional family of Melukote and taught Sanskrit at Tumkur. He has composed champu, devotional lyrics and dramas. The play Yaksaprasna Natakam is printed in Kavyakalapa Part-I in the year 1968 and is a one act play which has derived inspiration from "Yaksopakhyana of Mahabharata.

3. **Dharmavyadhadarsanam** - 1968

This work is also published in 1968 and reminds us of the "Dharmavyadha Upakhyana" of Mahabharata. Some of the statements of Bhajagovindam, Bhagavad Gita and the Sakuntala have been aptly blended here.

4. **Guptapasupatam** - Vishwanatha Satyanarayana - 1975

Vishwanatha Satyanarayana is a celebrated poet of Andhra Pradesh and the recipient of Jnanpith Award. Guptapasupatam is a play which is based on the Mahabharata story. The poet has written this 10 Act play with some modifications from Mahabharata. The fundamental question - why Mahabharata war took place has been taken up by the dramatist here. The dramatist firmly believes in the hand of fate and emphatically states that Krishna and Siva have made this war possible and the war culminates in the annihilation of the world and this is possible for the end of the existing aeon and then commencement of a new aeon.

Dramatist has a grand vision of portraying all the important ancedotes of Mahabharata in 10 acts. If Krishna is the presiding deity in Mahabharata, here it is Siva. Balooki is a new character introduced here and the role of Suhhadra gains prominence.

In Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya it is well known that Arjuna gets Pasupata weapon from Siva but it had no use in Mahabharata war. The author has tried to give his own reason here, wherein lies his novelty. The style of the poet is grand and has made use of some of the strange grammatical forms. In style and diction the present dramatist could be placed on par with Bhavabhuti and Bhattanarayana.

The following eight plays are from the pen of Vakulabhushana.:-

5. **Pratijnasantanavam** - Jaggu Vakalabhushana - 1993

   This is a story based on Mahabharata wherein Santanu's sensual pleasure and the introverted natutre of Bhisma are vividly portrayed.

6. **Adhbhutamsukam - 1993**

   This is a play in six acts with heroic element as the predominant Rasa and is a precursor to Bhattanarayana's Venisamhara.

7. **Virasaubhadram - 1993**

   This is also a play in two acts and is like a precursor to Bhasa's Dutaghatotkaca.

8. **Maniharanam - 1993**

   This is like a successor to Urubhanga of Bhasa and is a one act play.

9. **Apratimapratimam - 1993**

   This is a play in two acts wherein Krishna being accompanied by Pandavas visit Dhrtarastra. After war when Dhrtarastra has lost all his hundred children, when Krsna pushes forward the image of Bhima in front of the agitated Dhrtarastra and thus saves Bhima.

10. **Nighnatapasam - 1993**

    This is a play in two acts and depicts the life of Rsyasrnga.

11. **Prasannakasyapam - 1993**

    This is a play in three acts and is like a successor to Abhijnanasakuntalam.

12. **Unmattaklcakam** - K.S. Nagarajan – 1987

    K.S. Nagarajan worked as accountant general and has written his doctoral dissertation on "Contribution of Kashmir to Sanskrit Literature." He is the author of Mahakavyas, Khandakavyas and Dramas. Unmattakeecakam is a five act play and was published in the year I987 and Kicaka here totally differs from the Kicaka of Mahabharata in the sense that he is a good natured one and follows Draupadi with genuine love. Bhima is also sorrowful to Kicaka at the time of his death and Draupadi sheds tears. The Dramatist states in his preface that he is inspired by Kailasam. Sutradhara enters after Nandi in the footsteps of Bhasa.

13. **Gurusapam** - 1984

    This mythological play in six acts which received Devraj Bahadur prize was published in 1984 and is dedicated to T.P. Kailasam.

Karna is the predominant character here. He is bold and forgiving at the same time. But he is every minute bothered about his low caste though he gets Bhargavastra in the first act, still he is affected on account of his teacher's curse. Draupadi doesn't want to marry him as he is born in a low caste. He tells Kauravas that they should not insult Draupadi. He tries to take action to protect Draupadi but his weapon fails him. If his weapons had not failed, one could have avoided Pandava's forest life and later the Mahabharata war itself. Thus not only Karna but, all the Pandavas reap the consequence of the curse of Parasurama. Karna in the end dies in this play only on account of failure of his weapon.

14. **Ekacakram** - N. Ranganath Sharma – 1990
N. Ranganath Sharma taught Sanskrit at Chamarajendra Sanskrit College, Bangalore. He is the recipient of Mahamahopadhyaya Title from R.S. Vidyapeeta, Tirupati. His Kannada Translation of Valmiki Ramayana. Shankara Digvijaya, Panchadashi are well known. As a creative writer. He has composed a Khandakavya on the life of Shankaracharya, devotional poetry on Bahubali and two dramas. One based on Bahubali and the other based on Mahabharata. Ekacakram is a four act play based on the story of Adiparvan of Mahabharata. The work was published in 1990 from Bangalore. Following the style of Bhasa, Sutradhara enters after Nandi.

15. **Vikrantakarnam** - Baneshwar Pathak – 1990
Baneshwar Pathak taught Sanskrit at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. He has written number of Social and mythological plays in Sanskrit. Vikrantakarnam was published from Ranchi in 1990. Karna goes to Drona to learn archery, as he is a low caste boy, he is denied admission there. Then he goes to Parasu Rama. He learns archery by stating that he is a brahmin. Parasu Rama curses him. Duryodhana honours Karna being instigated by Sakuni. Karna pledges that he would help Duryodhana in the battle. Indra takes away his ear ornaments. Karna's chariot gets stuck in the mud. Arjuna releases arrow, Karna dies and Krishna praises Karna.

16. **Sravanam** - Ogeti Parikshit Sharma – 1983
Ogeti Parikshit Sharma of Andhra Pradesh is the recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award. Popularly known as "Girvanageyakavimandala Chakravarty" is the most prolific dramatist with twenty seven plays to his credit. The following plays based on Mahabharata can be considered here:-

Sravanam dramatises the Mahabharata episode of Sravana Kumara. Dasaratha receiving the curse from the parents of Sravana Kumara as a blessing is the substance of the play. It could be noted in passing that in his autobiographical novel of the present dramatist entitled "Kalaya tasmai namah" he has identified himself as Sravana.

17. **Pariksitam** narrates the character of Pariksit taken from Mahabharata. This play is male dominating one. The cause of Pariksits death has been imagined here.

18. **Nartanasala** is based on Virataparva of Mahabharata wherein Kicakavadha is depicted, Kicaka's death by Valala (Bhima) is shown on the stage on par with Bhasa's Urubhanga.

19. **Vajram vajrena bhidyate** narrates the treachery of Drupada against Drona and Drupada's excuse by Drona magnamimously as he is his childhood friend.

20. **Prabodhanam** depicts Krishna revealing to Karna his real identify and trying to lure him to the Pandava Camp.

21. **Uttaragograhanam** derives inspiration from Virataparva of Mahabharata. Arjuna as Brhannala helping Uttara to win over Kauravas and receiving the cows is the subject matter here.

22. **Bhismapratijna** depicts the great vow taken by Devavrata to remain a celibate throughout his life to satisfy his father's desire.

23. **Savitiri** is from Savitri Upakhyana of Mahabharata wherein Savitri getting back the life of her dead husband Satyavan is depicted.

24. **Purandhri Pancakam** - Ved Kumari Ghai - 1998
Ved Kumari Ghai was Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit at Jammu University. She is the recipient of Padmashree award from Government of India and was visiting Professor at Copenhagen. As a creative writer she has the collection of five Sanskrit plays based on the mythological theme. True to its name this is a collection of five plays depicting the greatness of five women Menaka, Draupadi, Madalasa, Sugandha and Sakuntala published from Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Delhi in 1998 as Bharat Svatantrya Svarnajayanti Granthamala -12

25. **Menakavaattsalyam** - 1998
This is a play in six scenes and the characters come on to the stage directly without the prologue. The play depicts the firm resolve of the woman who gives birth to a child in arduous situations and keeps the child in the hermitage of Kanva and wants her to develop into a lady with her own distinctive culture.

26. **Vidulaputriyam** - H.V. Nagaraja Rao - 1996
H.V. Nagaraja Rao of Mysore is the recipient of Presedent's certificate of honour. He was visiting Professor at U.S.A., France and Israel. Though a grammarian, he is also a creative writer in Sanskrit who has composed many Shatakakavyas and plays. Vidulaputriyam is published from Bharatiya Vidyabhavan Mumbai in 1996 and derives inspiration from Udyogaparvan of Mahabharata. There are 7 characters in this one act play like Sutradhara, Ghosaka, Nagarika, Vidula, Rajalaksmi, Sarvamangala and Rajasimha. Popular adages like Sotsahanam Nastyasadhyam naranam, transformation of popular statements of Malavikagnimira - Viz. Puranamityeva na sadhu sarvam as Pracinameva sakalam nakila prasastam have added grace to this play.

27. **Pramadvara** - Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra – 1984
Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra, former Vice Chancellor of Sampoornanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi is the most prolific Sanskrit poet of the present century. He is the recipient of awards like Sahitya Akademi Award, Vacaspati Puraskar, Brahmarshi, Mahamahopadhyaya and so on. He was visiting professor to Denpasar University, Indonesia. He has contributed Mahakavyas, Khandakavyas, Gadyakavyas, Champukavyas, Strotrakavyas, Dramas, Gazals and so on. He is the chairman of Sanskrit Advisory Board of Sahitya Akademi. Pramadvara is a natika in 4 acts and was published from Allahabad in 1984. Adiparvan of Mahabharata is the source for this play. Srngara is the major rasa

here. Ruru is the hero of the play. The song of Nati "Tava na jane hrdayam" depicts the letter of Sakuntala to Dusyanta in Sakuntala. The nature in all its exuberance is narrated here.

28. **Kasyapabhisapam** - 1984

This Mythological play has a novel change in the sense that Kanva curses Dusyanta instead of Durvasa cursing Sakuntala. When Dusyanta hits the antelope Dirghapanga the curse ends. The play has two scenes and the second scene depicts the religious austerities performed by Kanva on the banks of the river Malini. Gautami narrating Sakuntala's marriage to Dusyanta is a change brought out by the dramatist.

Bhimasatakam - Khandakavyam

Jata Sakuntala - Khandakavya on Sakuntala in 123 verses - 1989.

29. **Chayasakuntalam** - J.L. Parikh - Date not mentioned

J.L. Parikh is one of the prominent creative writers of the present century. Chayasakuntalam is a one act play inspired from the III and IV Acts of Uttararama Carita was published by the author in 1957. Though the story is old, the playwright has made some modifications. The Dusyanta here is more elevated than that of Sakuntala as he is full of remorse. Sakuntala is invisible to Dusyanta, whereas Dusyanta is visible to Sakuntala is the change brought about by the dramatist.

The second change brought about by the Dramatist is that the curse of Durvasa is known only to Priyamvada here and not to Anasuya. The dramatist is well versed in using apt similies and Karunarasa.

30. **Anuravam** - Koganti Sitaramacharya - Date not mentioned

Koganti Sitaramacharya is a popular Sanskrit poet of Guntur in Andhra Pradesh and has composed two plays based on Mahabharata. Anuravam is a one act play inspired from Mahabharata and depicts the mean and jealous attitude of Kadru.

31. **Aikalavyam** - Date not mentioned

This is a seven act play inspired from Mahabharata. Ekalavya's devotion towards Drona, Arjuna's jealously have been naturally depicted here.

Ekalavya's statement

Idam dhanurime banah grham caitadidam vapuh
Yadrocate tadevastu daksina parigrhyatam

depicts Ekalavya's devotion to Drona.

CONCLUSION

The Mahabharata is at once an archive and a living text; a museum and a laboratory; and a source book, complete by itself, and an open text, perennially under construction. A storehouse of information, the Mahabharata furnishes ample material to any professional interested in excavation; and the professional may don the hat of, say, an anthropologist, a historian, a sociologist, a linguist, a literary critic, a historian of ideas, or a creative philosopher to work out, even if provisionally, some or the other well-integrated meaning. On the other hand, in the course of entering the Mahabharata, there is almost no one who does not undergo a sense of déjà vu - an inescapable feeling that the 'present / he inhabits is only a replay of 'happenings' already recorded; an eerie sensation that most of the ethical dilemmas, the logical puzzles and the unavoidable impasses which baffle the modern man, as well as the mood of irresolution following every resolution that keeps plaguing him / her have already been punctiliously check-listed.

Thus, in the cast of the Mahabharata, two interpretative paths - one devoted to the uncovering of a shadowy past and the other engaged in negotiating the contemporary - keep intersecting. Scholars - who are engrossed in sifting through various confusing variants in order to bring coherence to a chaotic corpus, and absorbed in the pursuit of transforming a 'literary unthing' into a critically codified text that can shed light on India's past with sufficient cogence - collaborate, wittingly or unwittingly, with amateurs who, even while critically reflecting on 'current affairs', remain more or less convinced that the Mahabharata is no less than a chronicle of events foretold'. This double play of 'freezing' and 'de-freezing' - the double move of construing a decisive 'body of words' that can be employed to prove or disprove any scientific hypothesis in relation to the past, and of reckoning the same as being a tool that can be employed to decipher the mysteries of the present - renders a magical quality to the Mahabharata.

❑

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